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The Week

SPONTANEOUS and worldwide denunciation of the Laval-Hoare peace plan, since the terms leaked out ten days ago, indicates that the League of Nations Council, meeting at Geneva on Wednesday, undoubtedly will reject this particular proposal for ending the Italo-Ethiopian conflict. Emperor Haile Selassie rightly protested to the League against a plan that instead of punishing a declared aggressor actually partitions a member nation in order to reward the aggressor with vast territories far beyond any indicated power of even his military operations to conquer them. Mussolini rather cagily has given no official acceptance of the plan as a basis for negotiations, and his formal reply, to be framed at a meeting of the Fascist Grand Council on Wednesday, may even go to the length of rejecting the plan as inadequate, in order to put himself

THE full fury of denunciation broke in Great Britain, where the government was accused by friend and foe alike of betraying both the League and its own campaign promises. A stormy session was indicated when Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin agreed to come before the House of Commons on Thursday to be questioned on his government's course of action, probably taking the line of defense that the situation was desperate, that the plan was the best that could be obtained in view of the pro-Italian sentiments of Premier Laval, and that it was in any event a mere proposal, to be accepted or rejected by the League. There was indeed good basis for believing that Mussolini had indicated his definite intention of bombing British warships in the Mediterranean if oil sanctions were applied, and that Laval, while promising that France would live up to its agreement to come to Britain's aid in such an event, had said that the lack of adequate naval bases and the number of French ships now out of commission might make that aid both tardy and ineffectual. A curious overtone of the entire affair was the reassertion of royal prerogative. A persistent story had it that the British Cabinet was finally persuaded to accept the plan at the personal intervention of King George of England, who had been appealed to by the King of Italy, acting through the King of Belgium. In any event the pro-Fascist forces have achieved the minor goal of postponing the threatened oil embargo.

JAPANESE delegates at the London Naval Conference moved this week to break the deadlock precipitated by their own demand that the question of parity, as embodied in their phrase "a common upper limit," be considered before any other questions. They announced on Sunday that while not yielding on the primacy of parity, they would be willing to discuss other questions at the same time. Japanese military advances in North China, still conducted in the guise of "friendly support" for an "autonomy" move by the provinces of Chahar and Hopei, this week included the occupation of Kalgan, ancient capital of Chahar and starting point for caravan routes to Outer Mongolia, and seizure of Tangku, seaport of Tientsin, by troops of the autonomous regime. Japanese army units marched into Kalgan on the very day that a delegation of

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with great ceremony in Moscow by high officials of the Soviet Union.

A NUMBER of administrative changes took place in various countries this week. President Mendieta of Cuba resigned over difficulties in planning the general elections now scheduled for January 10. Secretary of State José Barnet automatically succeeded him, but the really significant factor is that Colonel Fulgencio Batista remains as head of the army and virtual dictator of Cuba. Thomas G. Masaryk, founder and first President of Czechoslovakia, resigned at the age of eighty-five, after having held the presidency for seventeen years. Under pressure of repeated nationalist riots in Cairo and other cities, Great Britain announced the restoration of the 1923 Constitution to Egypt, and plans were made for general elections next year. Former President Calles returned to Mexico City, and there were rumors that he might attempt a military coup to overthrow President Cardenas and regain the office for himself.

THREE crucial New Deal measures passed into the hands of the Supreme Court as hearings were completed on cases involving the constitutionality of the A.A.A. and Bankhead cotton-control acts, and the Court prepared to begin hearings on the T.V.A. on Thursday. Decisions are expected in January. Disruption of the world market for silver was caused when the United States, virtually the only large buyer in the world market, suddenly stopped its silver-purchase operations. The market recovered somewhat when the United States resumed buying on a limited scale. Political activities came to the front as the Republican National Committee met in Washington, selected Cleveland for the 1936 convention, and surveyed possible candidates and issues. Former President Hoover, in an address before the Republican Club of St. Louis that was broadcast over a national network, delivered another assault on the New Deal. Governor Talmadge of Georgia called a meeting of his Southern Committee to Uphold the Constitution to be held in Atlanta during the last week in January, and continued his opposition to the renomination of President Roosevelt by the Democrats. He said he would be willing to accept the nomination himself, if tendered to him. Dr. F. E. Townsend began a poll of all members of Congress as to their stand on the Townsend Plan, announcing that he and his supporters would enter a presidential ticket in the 1936 campaign.

FRANCE wants a republican form of government and the fascist Leagues know it. The Croix de Feu and similar organizations have never been able to gain the broad popular support that the Brown Shirt and Black Shirt movements gained in Germany and Italy. It was largely the menace of armed the leftist parties in the People's Front. Last week in the Chamber of Deputies the fascist Leagues suddenly made an offer of voluntary disarmament. The purpose of this dramatic maneuver by the rightists was twofold: to enable their friend, Premier Laval, to remain in office by solving what was in many ways his most vexing internal problem; and to split off the Radical Socialists—or at least the right wing of the party—by removing the chief factor that brought about their adherence to the People's Front. The trick didn't quite work. When the disarmament proposal was brought before the Deputies in the form of legislation, the People's Front used its majority to add amendments providing for real, rather than rhetorical, disarmament—so much so that the rightists went back on their original proposal and voted against the bills. The bills were passed, however, and now go to the Senate for consideration. Premier Laval remains precariously in power, but this fresh demonstration of the insincerity of the republican pretensions of the fascist Leagues has given the People's Front greater solidarity than ever.

AN IMPORTANT political development took place recently in Wisconsin when a statewide gathering of nine organizations formed the Farmer Labor Progressive Federation. These included Socialists, Progressives of the La Follette group, farmers and representatives of the State Federation of Labor. Communists did not participate formally, but are invited to do so as individuals. The Federation broke definitely with the mild reformism of the late Senator Robert La Follette Sr., and came out flatfootedly for "production for use" and the abolition of the profit system. In Wisconsin, the new group will support the Progressives, and this will in all probability ensure the reëlection of Governor Phil La Follette and Mayor Hoan of Milwaukee in 1936. It is expected to smash the coalition of conservative Republicans and Democrats that now rules the state Senate. While the Socialist Party will support the F. L. P. F. in the state, it will retain its identity as regards the presidential election. The power of the new movement can be gauged by the terror it has created in the ranks of the conservatives, who are indulging in the usual vilification in the press and are forming "S.O.S." clubs to "Save Our State."

MORE than 25,000 workers on W. P. A. projects in Iowa have voted to strike on January 2. They are asking an increase in the wages paid, which now range from $40 to $80 a month for 120 hours' work. It is understood that the strikers would accept a general ten-percent increase, with a minimum of $55, and The New Republic hopes that the strike may be settled on that basis. We have often protested the "starvation wage" set under the original W. P. A. program, and we have welcomed the in-

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a month is not enough money to maintain a family decently in Iowa or in any other state with a comparable cost of living. The difference between a strike against the W. P. A. and one against a private employer is that in the latter case, closing down a factory costs the owner money while a strike against the W. P. A. simply saves the government expense. For this reason, we hope that if a strike does come, it will be made a demonstration stoppage for a definite period of time, whose length will be announced in advance. At present, the W. P. A. workers' best hope is to arouse public opinion in their favor; and the best chance of doing so would be through such a demonstration as we suggest.

THE toastmaster at a dinner in New York City raised his glass and said, "To the President of the United States." What do you suppose happened then? We quote from The New York Times:

> The diners seemed to have been taken aback by the proposal of the toast. Only a few rose at first, grinning as they did so. Then came a ripple of laughter from various parts of the hall which caught on quickly and became general as more of the audience rose lifting their glasses. The laughter continued for some time after they resumed their seats.

Later in the evening another speaker remarked, "Never have I admired the Overlord of New Jersey [apparently a nickname of the toastmaster] as much as I did tonight. That toast!" He finished the sentence, according to The Times, with a wide gesture of the hand, and the audience took this as a signal for more laughter. This strange episode, you think, took place among a gathering of Communists or German agents? Not at all—it was during a dinner of public-utility executives. The toastmaster and overlord of New Jersey was Mr. Thomas N. McCarter, president of the Public Service Electric and Gas Company of New Jersey, and of the Edison Electric Institute. The other speaker was Mr. Floyd L. Carlisle, of Consolidated Gas and Niagara Hudson. Gentlemen like this can afford to laugh because they are above the law, but most of us still cherish a faint respect for the President of the United States, even though the incumbent of that office may be wrong a thousand ways.

SHOULD a college run a sweatshop? That is the question by which Teachers' College, Columbia University, is confronted today. Some months ago, a labor dispute broke out among the badly paid workers in the college-operated cafeteria. Dean William Russell appointed a committee drawn from the faculty and students to investigate the situation and report, and this report has now been published. In brief summary, it shows:

> That the college cafeteria has discriminated against union members on the ground of their union affiliation.
>
> That despite the usual charges of "radicalism," the
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> That during the depression, the poorest-paid employees have been cut 40 percent, though the average cut has been only 20 percent, and the highest paid officials were cut only 4 percent. Some union members have been dismissed, and others have received maximum wage cuts.

In acknowledging the report of his committee, Dean Russell wrote: "I shall propose to the Trustees that we reëxamine our policies of pay, charges and employment in the Teachers' College Dining Halls, and we shall appoint the committee to consider the labor policies, to which you refer. We have always thought that we had a fair and efficient labor policy. If it appears to need modification in the light of the most careful study, we shall change it, and as quickly as possible." It is to be hoped that the trustees will live up to the spirit of Dean Russell's letter. Teachers' College has great prestige among American colleges; it can and should set an example to the whole country, especially in view of the liberal philosophy that underlies much of its classroom instruction.

THE automobile industry has not shared its present burst of prosperity with its workers. The United States Department of Labor reports that average weekly earnings of all labor in the industry are about $25 a week, with much time lost for reasons beyond the worker's control, even when business is good. In 1934, the plants were closed more than one-third of the time, and in that year 45 percent of all workers received less than $1,000; in one factory, three-fifths of the workers got less than $800, one-third less than $400. In the Chevrolet transmission plant in Toledo weekly earnings for many of the employees are less than $16.

THESE facts lend particular interest to the strike recently called against the Motor Products Corporation in Detroit, protesting wage reductions, a strike which some observers believe may have great significance. It was called by several independent unions working together: the Automotive Industrial Workers' Association, the Mechanics' Education Society and the Associated Automobile Workers of America. These three unions are now engaged in a referendum among their members to say whether they shall amalgamate, and it is expected that the result, to be announced about the time this issue of The New Republic appears, will be favorable. The American Federation of Labor has two unions both of which have some slight representation in the Motor Products Corporation plant; their attitude thus far toward the strike has been very far from coöperative. Indeed, members of the striking unions charge the leader of the A.F. of L. group with open hostility. There is great interest, in Detroit, in the possible entrance of John L. Lewis into the picture since his recent break with William Green and his espousal of industrial unionism. If Lewis is sincere

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sake of his own prestige, he can hardly afford to reject.

THE Greyhound Bus Lines are likely to figure prominently in newspaper headlines during the next few weeks. The Pennsylvania Greyhound Lines, Inc., are involved in a case which may be taken to the Supreme Court to test the validity of the new Industrial Disputes Act. The National Labor Relations Board the other day petitioned the Federal Circuit Court in Philadelphia to enforce an order against this company that it shall abandon its company union, engage in genuine collective bargaining with its employees and reinstate with full back pay five of their number who, the Board says, were dismissed for union activities.

THIS company, part of a national bus-transportation system, is controlled by a subsidiary of the Pennsylvania Railroad. It had no labor organization of any kind before the N.R.A. but in July, 1933, like many another company, it decided to set up a plan of employee representation. Robert J. Davison was chosen as chairman but early in 1935 he came to the conclusion that he could do nothing for the men under this scheme, and helped to organize Local 1063 of the Amalgamated Association of Street, Electric Railroad and Motor Coach Employees of America. The company, which had liked its own union so well, didn't like this one at all. It spied on meetings, issued warnings and threats, and finally dismissed five union leaders, among them Mr. Davison, who had just received special recognition because he had worked for four years without an accident. The testimony already taken seems to show beyond doubt that the law was violated, and no one can question that a nationwide bus system should be regulated as interstate commerce.

A GOOD deal has been printed about repression in the colleges, but not much is heard about repression in the high schools, though for various reasons it is much the more drastic and complete of the two. An incident in New York City a few days ago showed the ridiculous length to which the witch hunters are going nowadays. A group of students at Stuyvesant High School held a meeting to consider the plans for a new national organization of students. Having been unable to obtain a room in the high school for this purpose, they met in a private house. As the meeting was beginning, two policemen forced their way in (without invitation or search warrants), announced that "this is a communist meeting" and ordered the participants to leave. One of those present was James Wechsler, former editor of the Columbia University Spectator, and an organizer of the new students' union. Mr. Wechsler and the student whose home had been invaded were taken by police to the offices of the high school, where they were interrogated in the endeavor to obtain the names of other students who had been present. The incident was reported in the nationwide peace demonstrations of last April. It was also revealed that the authorities are using student informers to carry tales about their fellows whom they suspect of radicalism. We hardly know whether to call this episode ridiculous or disgraceful. In any case, its implications are plain: they are those of Hitlerism in its crudest form.

THE oppressive working conditions in Wall Street —no, let us begin it another way, for this is a sort of Christmas story and ought to have a livelier start. The hero of our little Yuletide tale is a Wall Street worker who must remain anonymous here. His salary during the past year has been so meager that he found he could ill afford the pleasant custom of giving Christmas presents. He refused to be daunted, however, for he discovered that by spending his evenings selling Real Silk Hosiery—with razor blades as a side line—he could eke out enough nickels to buy a few gifts. What gives the story special drama is the fact that our hero is the security analyst of bank stocks and insurance-company issues for a leading statistical organization, which sells a high-priced investment-counseling service. What we should like to know is whether the banks, financial houses and investors who buy and no doubt place confidence in our hero's analytical reports would be equally impressed if they knew that he carried razor blades and silk stockings on the side. That, it seems to us, is a grand Christmas conundrum for the kiddies—indeed, for Uncle Marx himself.

Sanctions or Neutrality

A VALUED contributor, Professor Frederick L. Schuman of the University of Chicago, writes to oppose The New Republic's policy in regard to League sanctions and neutrality. (His letter appears on page 200 of this issue.) This is a problem of the utmost importance and the greatest complexity, the last word on which cannot be pronounced for a long time to come. Since it involves all the uncertainty of the future, nobody can be completely sure he is right about it, and every intelligent addition to the debate is to be welcomed. Mr. Schuman and the others who share his views have not, however, convinced us, and we think a reply is specially pertinent in view of the international developments of the past two weeks—developments that have occurred since the letter itself was written.

Mr. Schuman begins by stating a conclusion with which we heartily agree—that Japan, Germany and Italy, all fascist or semi-fascist Powers, are tremendous threats to peace and liberalism throughout the world, and that any concessions to them will be interpreted as weakness by their rulers. He then proceeds to argue that the League today is not the League of Wilson, Poincaré, Stresemann or Briand,

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The "selfish" interests of its leading nations "happen to coincide for the present with the interests of all liberals and of all friends of peace." This argument seems to us entirely too simple.

The governments of France and Great Britain, the most powerful nations in the League except the Soviet Union, are conservative, capitalist governments. France for a long time has been trying to prevent the imposition of effective sanctions upon Italy. Laval has been influenced in this matter by a number of considerations, among which the most prominent are: pro-fascist tendencies of French industry and capital, a military understanding with Mussolini, a previous agreement with Mussolini consenting to imperialist aggression in Ethiopia, and uncertainty as to where Britain would stand if France should become involved in a future war with Germany.

The British government has, in words, supported League action much more strongly than has Laval; but it was dilatory in forewarning Mussolini of the result of his aggression, it has refrained not only from proposing that the Suez Canal be closed to Italian troops and military supplies—a measure that would have nipped the war in the bud—but from urging embargoes upon oil, coal and iron. Its endorsement of the recent and notorious Hoare-Laval peace terms, which offered to Italy more than Italy was likely to win by the war, indicates clearly enough how little it is to be relied upon. Many Tories, while they do not want Mussolini to threaten the Empire, desire still less that he be overthrown. Many regard Hitler as the great bulwark against Bolshevism. The oil companies and the "city" are influential with the Cabinet; and in any case the government shrinks from taking action which might precipitate the necessity for military sanctions—that is, the necessity for war against Italy.

All this Mr. Schuman would doubtless now admit. He might, however, reply that the parties of the French left, plus the British Labor Party and peace movement, are all engaged in pushing their respective governments into more determined and consistent action in support of the League. Why, then, is it not the part of Americans who share the ideals and purposes of these great forces to adopt the same policy in regard to their own government? The League may be betrayed by the conservatives, it is true, but in that case a future war is nearly inevitable; whereas if the popular movements throughout the world do succeed in strengthening the League sufficiently, there is a chance of averting a war of aggression.

This is a sufficient justification for the pro-sanctions policy of the Soviet Union and its probable allies. If the threat of sanctions does not prevent German aggression, nations like the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Rumania and the Baltic States will have to fight anyway, since they will be the immediate objects of the aggression. If France, Britain and the Scandinavian countries are loyal to the [illegible] the war, they will, by the application of sanctions, give powerful help to those who are attacked. Therefore the nations immediately threatened have nothing to lose and everything to gain by a strong League, and their European sympathizers will naturally support it.

For us in America, however, who are not threatened by invasion or immediate involvement in the war, the issues are different. There is, to be sure, a chance that a strong League, threatening certain and drastic sanctions against any aggressor, would prevent war. There is virtually no chance that the members of such a League could stay out of the war if it came, provided they lived up to their obligations. But there is a chance that the United States, by adopting the correct policy outside the League, could remain at peace. The best choice for this country depends therefore on one's assessment of these chances. If one thinks that the League can, with American help, avert war, but that if war comes we cannot remain neutral, he will logically choose League coöperation. If he thinks that the League cannot avert war, but that the United States can remain neutral, he will choose the neutral policy —unless his primary aim is to join an armed crusade in behalf of the League powers.

In order to suppose that a new war may be prevented through the League, one would have to assume (1) that the present rulers of Germany, with their prospective allies, would not start a war if they were certain the other League Powers would impose sanctions, and (2), that those Powers will act in such a way as to produce that certainty. The first assumption seems to us extremely tenuous. It is tantamount to saying that Hitler, plus his counterparts in Japan, Poland, Austria, Hungary and possibly Italy as well, would not in their madness and desperation risk a war against the former Entente. The second assumption is even further from probability. The governments of France and Britain are at this moment negotiating with Germany. If the British Conservatives have hesitated to take decisive action against Mussolini, how much more will they not hesitate to check Hitler, when he attacks Communist Russia? Hitler well knows that the British labor and peace movement, while it favors sanctions, favors them as a means not of getting into war but of staying out. He has only to threaten convincingly at the last moment that he will not accept economic sanctions without military reprisal in order to bring popular support to a British government that did not want to fight him.

On the other hand, the chance that the United States could keep out of a European war would be large if Congress, before its outbreak, adopted legislation forbidding loans and exports of munitions and essential war materials to all belligerents. As we have admitted, such a policy would cause heavy losses to powerful interests in this country and would be difficult to maintain. Nevertheless it is a cause about which Ameri[illegible]

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League. There is a fighting chance of effectuating it. If it were tried and failed, we should know that we were entering the struggle, not for some noble abstraction that cannot ultimately be obtained by war, but purely for financial and commercial interests.

What would be the effect of such a neutrality policy on the belligerents, in case the liberals and socialists of Europe forced their governments into a war upon aggressive fascism? It would, to be sure, damage Britain, France and the Soviet Union, but, after all, these nations have access to other sources of supply. The first two would be in touch with the outside world, while the third is nearly self-sustaining. The policy would, however, be ruinous to Japan and would reinforce any blockade imposed by the British navy against Germany and her European allies. If Britain or France or both remained neutral, selling goods to Germany and Japan, a policy of non-intercourse on the part of the United States would be far more effective in stopping the war than would coöperation with a broken-down League that was doing nothing. If the neutrality policy we advocate were now in existence, we should be doing more to check Italy than the League itself is doing. And in the event—unlikely but still possible—that France or Britain or both joined the anti-Soviet alliance by one subterfuge or another, we should be well out of it.

It must be admitted that the danger of another world war in which this country will become embroiled is great, so long as the world is, in the main, a capitalist and imperialist one. But the deep popular instinct in this country to stay out of the mess is one of the fundamental forces in the situation. It may be put to use in the service of civilization; it can be betrayed only at the risk of a terrible reaction. Liberals and other friends of peace can oppose it only at the peril of their cause.

Tugwell to the Wolves?

THE EFFORTS to drive Rexford G. Tugwell out of Washington are now more vigorous than at any time during the Roosevelt administration. The newspapers contain columns of gossip to the effect that he is about to be eased out of the picture by an appointment to a harmless foreign post; that Farley warned President Roosevelt he can "lose with Tugwell, or win without him"; and so on. When The New York Times printed a wholly erroneous story that Tugwell had twice as many office workers as clients, it was widely copied throughout the country, and the correction which The Times itself promptly published never caught up with the original tale.

The unfairness of nearly all this criticism hardly needs to be pointed out to New Republic readers. As we have often reported in our columns, there [illegible] in Washington the men and in any case violently disagreed on many fundamental points. There is no evidence that President Roosevelt ever took their advice—either collectively, since there was no collective program, or individually. The charge that Mr. Tugwell is a revolutionary can be disproved by reading any of his books; far from seeking to overturn the present system of society, he is trying to shore it up so that it will work without causing an unendurable amount of human suffering, without partially collapsing every few years or perhaps entirely collapsing in the near future. The degree to which Mr. Roosevelt's policies depart from even Mr. Tugwell's mild ideals is patent to every observer not blinded by Tory high blood pressure.

We are not at all sure that Mr. Tugwell's own best interests are served by his remaining in Washington; but we are quite sure that if he goes, Mr. Roosevelt's standing among the liberals whose favor he so often courts in his speeches will be even further damaged than it is today. It is safe to predict that if Tugwell goes, the work he is now doing will also be scrapped, and that work constitutes one of the few remaining fragments of whatever was once hopeful in the New Deal. Since Mr. Tugwell's conservative enemies rarely take the trouble to say what he is doing, it may be useful to summarize the facts.

The Resettlement Administration is now engaged in rescuing 15,000 families attempting to farm on land so bad that the effort is hopeless; these—and many more—will be started on new land and with buildings and equipment giving them at least a fighting chance. The government has already bought 10,000,000 acres for this program, in 208 parcels scattered through 44 of the 48 states. In addition, 350,000 other farm families are being rehabilitated through small loans, through encouragement in diversified farming, less reliance on cash crops, etc. These farmers are now all on relief, and this relief is costing every year as much as the average farm loan made through the Resettlement Administration. The R. A. has inherited from other departments about sixty subsistence-homestead projects, many of which need complete reorganization and reorientation. Settlers in these are being shifted over to a purely agricultural basis, along the lines indicated above.

Four suburban developments near cities are being carried out along the lines of Letchworth and Welwyn in England. These developments will be useful (a) in giving good housing at low cost to a large number of families among industrial workers, (b) in showing the country what can now be done in the way of town planning, (c) in providing an invaluable experiment field for new methods of constructing houses at costs lower than anyone in this country has heretofore dreamed of.

All this work in the field of land utilization was recommended and encouraged by Mr. Roosevelt while he was Governor of New York. A land policy

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many years. It was endorsed by the Republicans in 1932. As is the habit of politicians, the Republicans repudiate their own ideas when carried out by the opposing party; and there is some reason to fear that Mr. Roosevelt has lost interest in these plans when they have been misrepresented by his enemies to the point where they have become, or he fears they may become, a political liability. If he believes he can placate the conservatives by now throwing Mr. Tugwell to the wolves and abandoning the work of the Resettlement Administration, he is mistaken; nothing that the President can now do could possibly persuade the Tories to take him to their collective bosom. It would be a mistake that might cost him, and the country, dearly.

A Man Is Killed

WHEN Southern white men lynch a Negro, that's not news. When Southern white men, under the eyes of local police and apparently with their tacit approval, kidnap a white man and beat him so badly he dies, that is perhaps something else again.

In Tampa, Florida, there is a political party called the Modern Democrats, whose program of "the economy of abundance" is about as far left as that of Upton Sinclair's Epic movement in California. It contested a recent election with the old-line Democrats and lost, though its adherents claim that it might have won except for wholesale vote stealing. A short time ago, a small group of leaders of the Modern Democrats were holding a meeting in a private house, when city police broke in without warrants and arrested several of them.

Three of these men—Joseph Shoemaker, S. C. Rogers and E. F. Pulnot—were released by the police at the station house with suspicious promptitude and cordiality. As they left the building, they were "invited," separately, to get into automobiles that stood at the curb, being told that they would be driven home. One of the occupants of these automobiles was recognized as a city detective. When Pulnot resisted, he was forcibly shoved into the car, and as a crowd gathered, attracted by the struggle, the men in the car said that he was crazy, and was being taken to the hospital—implying that they were police officers. During this scene, a lieutenant of police stood looking on from the doorway a few feet distant. All three men were taken into the woods near Tampa, severely beaten with chains and rawhide whips, and tarred and feathered. Two of them, Pulnot and Rogers, managed to make their way back to Tampa and get the assistance of friends. Shoemaker collapsed near the spot where he was beaten, and died a few days later. Now the city authorities of Tampa are going through the motions of "investigating," but apparently nobody in the state of Florida expects any substantial re-

The charge on which the Modern Democrats were arrested was "suspicion of Communism." We do not know under what law being a Communist is illegal in Florida, but in any event the charge is both false and absurd on its face—as false as a similar allegation would be against Upton Sinclair. The real grievance against the Modern Democrats was that some of them had been fighting for better treatment of the unemployed in Tampa, many of whom are now on W. P. A. projects at a wage of $7.50 a week for a full week's work, and that they had helped call public attention to the relations between the city administration and Tampa's flourishing colony of gamblers. The case has attracted national attention; William Green, Norman Thomas and others have made protests, and even in Florida itself there have been expressions of indignation. Particularly fine has been the attitude of several ministers in Tampa, who participated last Sunday in a "service of public penitence." We know the names of three of them—Walter Metcalf, R. E. Wicker and G. F. Snyder; they certainly belong in any honor roll of fighters for civil liberties in 1935.

It still seems probable, however, that majority opinion in Florida was expressed by the editor of The Fort Myers News Press when he wrote (before Shoemaker died):

> If we should have a flogging here in Fort Myers like the one that is causing all the excitement in Tampa, there would be the same public outcry, for the record, demanding punishment of the perpetrators.
>
> Meanwhile, up and down the streets, in stores, offices and in homes where people knew who did it and why, there might be some altogether different talk going on: talk to the effect that the victims had it coming and got what they deserved. If those who were flogged and tarred and feathered had been causing a lot of trouble here, with no legal way of curbing their cussedness, there probably would be a pronounced lack of sympathy for what happened to them and no important censure for those who did it.
>
> However, the chastisement administered the other day was by all accounts unnecessarily brutal and the people of Tampa may be saying that this time the boys went too far. . . .

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Will Japan Crack Up?

I: *The Crisis on the Home Front*

THE FIFTH year of Japan's military aggressions on the Asiatic mainland opens with a new forward move, which bids fair to add the richest provinces of North China to the Mikado's growing empire. Favored by geographical isolation, the preoccupation of Western powers with internal and external difficulties, and relatively weak opposition from China, the Japanese juggernaut rolls forward securely on its path of conquest. What forces may be expected to call a halt to this advance? For the moment, effective opposition by the United States, Great Britain or the Soviet Union—the three Western powers most nearly affected—may be discounted. While the army continues its triumphant career a domestic collapse is also unlikely. Despite the obvious strain to which Japanese finances have been subjected since 1932, the long predicted crash has not materialized. Nor has any effective political opposition, either liberal or revolutionary, made its appearance. Unless a miracle intervenes, however, Japan's leaders will sooner or later plunge their country into a first-class war, for which they are feverishly preparing. The outcome of such a war will be uncertain and the national resources will have to be strained to the limit. It is reasonable to expect that, instead of an uninterrupted procession of victories, some reverses will be sustained. In this case, what surety is there that Japan will not eventually be confronted with an internal upheaval?

An analysis of Japan's home front must take account of three factors: the labor movement, the acute agrarian distress, and the subject populations of the empire. Since the middle of 1932, Japan has been experiencing the intoxication of a war boom in the munitions industry and allied branches of production. In addition, owing to an unusual combination of circumstances, it has enjoyed an extraordinary trade expansion at a time when world trade as a whole was in the doldrums. The characteristic feature of this upswing, however, has been the uneven distribution of its resulting gains. Munitions plants have naturally prospered, and the profits of the larger and better organized commercial and industrial concerns have risen steeply. But many of the smaller industrial establishments, unaided by monopoly advantages, have never recovered from the pre-1932 slump.

The gains to labor have been even more questionable. According to official figures, unemployment decreased from 455,000 in November, 1931, to [illegible] figure. On any showing, the decrease in unemployment is relatively small compared to the increase of production. During this "revival," moreover, the standard of living of the employed workers has notably declined. The index of Tokyo wholesale prices, based on January, 1913, rose from 116 in November, 1931, to 179.3 in September, 1935. Tokyo retail prices, based on July, 1914, rose from 135 in November, 1931, to 154 in September, 1935. Meanwhile wage rates were falling steadily. For the years 1931-34 inclusive, based on 1926, the wage-rate index was 91.3, 88.1, 85.1 and 82.9. This decline continued into 1935, with the wage-rate index registering 82.2 in January and 81 in June.

These figures offer convincing evidence that the production boom stimulated by semi-war conditions and trade expansion has not benefited the Japanese working class. This condition may or may not be responsible for the fact that the number of strikes in Japan has considerably increased over the past two years. In Osaka alone, during the first six months of 1935, one group of unions was involved in ten strikes. Nevertheless, the Japanese labor movement as a whole remains relatively weak. Only seven or eight percent of the Japanese workers are organized into trade unions. Of these, the reformist and right-wing unions control approximately 70 percent, Fascist unions 20 percent and legal left-wing unions 10 percent. The exact strength of the underground opposition is unknown, although the arrest of over 50,000 Communist suspects since 1928 indicates that it is considerable. It reaches from the illegal trade unions to the highest circles of Japanese society, where it has affected judges, professors, officials and sons and daughters of generals, peers and millionaire families. In a period of crisis its influence might be decisive. The Fascist unions actively support the war program in China, while the reformist and right-wing unions accord it passive support. It is perhaps indicative of present tendencies that the strength of the legal left-wing unions, which have not contributed to the national-defense loans, has been gradually increasing. Occasional reports suggest that in some cases, notably at Shanghai in 1932, the underground opposition has partially undermined the morale of the armed forces.

In an estimate of the potential revolutionary forces in Japan, however, the workers do not stand alone. They have a powerful ally in the Japanese peasantry. The industrial boom of recent years [illegible]

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farmers—raising chiefly rice and silk—suffered from the increasing competition of Korean and Formosan rice and the growing use of rayon and rayon mixtures. With the onset of the depression, purchases of raw silk by the United States fell off sharply. Total Japanese exports of raw silk declined in value from 781,000,000 yen in 1929 to 287,000,000 yen in 1934. A large overproduction of rice also occurred during these years; despite government efforts to buy up the surplus at fixed prices, the effects were as disastrous to the Japanese farmer as the falling off in raw-silk exports.

Progress toward the diversification of Japanese agriculture, which might have cushioned the blow struck by the depression, is handicapped by the antiquated aspects of the land system. Landlords exact high rents from tenant farmers without contributing to capital equipment or improved productive technique. The small acreage of most farms—holdings in some areas still remain unconsolidated—also hinders the adoption of modern technical methods. The price of land is extremely high. The tax system weighs disproportionately on the rural sections. Many farms are heavily mortgaged, total farm indebtedness having been conservatively estimated at 6,000,000,000 yen in the early period of the crisis. Under these circumstances, the depression reacted catastrophically on the Japanese rural areas. During recent years famine conditions have prevailed in many regions, notably Tohoku prefecture. In some districts the farmers have subsisted on grass roots, cattle feed and fish entrails, ordinarily used for fertilizer. Daughters of peasant households have been sold into prostitution in increasing numbers.

The unrest generated by the agricultural crisis may be gauged by the growing number of tenant-landowner conflicts on the Japanese countryside. In 1933 there were 3,384 recorded peasant outbreaks; estimates for 1934 total 4,000, while for 1935 the figure is expected to reach 5,000. These danger signals have not passed unnoticed by the Japanese military, especially the more active Fascist leaders. Their concern is not lessened by the fact that 70 or 80 percent of the army conscripts are drawn from the country districts. Through the network of reservists' associations, General Araki and his closest aides have sought to mobilize peasant support for the expansionist program by intensive propaganda and a demagogic campaign for farm-relief measures. For five successive years army officers and representatives of the Fascist societies have lectured almost continuously in the small villages throughout Japan.

Though at first largely successful, the effects of this campaign are now beginning to wear off. Members of the old-line political parties who venture to expose the military policy, particularly the relation of the mounting burden of military expenditure to taxation and farm relief, meet with an increasingly favorable response from the peasants. In the pre- representatives of "independent" and "non-property" parties—ambiguous labels adopted to avoid suppression—were elected to the local assemblies. The majority of these were chosen from rural constituencies. Their election, under the present conditions of rigid official repression, constitutes striking evidence of the extent of rural unrest. The impact of the depression has also caused a swing to the left in the dominantly conservative Tenants' Union, which embraces 300,000 families. The strength of the militant National Peasants' Union, enrolling about 50,000 families at present, is rapidly increasing. In one prefecture, where some of the largest landlord estates are concentrated, the struggles led by this union have reduced rents to the lowest level in Japan. Under pressure of the authorities, these peasant unions have learned to operate with a minimum of organizational apparatus—a fact that hardly serves to lessen their potential threat.

The acute distress of Japan's rural population, in a setting where remnants of a feudal economy still persist, supplies the fuel for an agrarian revolution of large proportions. Impressive historical testimony on this point is afforded by the "rice riots" of 1918, which galvanized millions of the peasantry into action and culminated in a series of desperate encounters with army units and marine "bluejackets." A crisis of similar magnitude today would subject the reliability of these armed forces to a much more severe test.

If Japan's home front is extended to include the empire, a third factor of basic significance must be taken into consideration. In round numbers, the total population of the Japanese empire amounts to 120,000,000, of which 55,000,000 consist of subject nationalities. Formosa contains 5,000,000, Korea 20,000,000, and Manchukuo 30,000,000. In a life-and-death struggle with major powers, Japan would be faced with a policing task of formidable proportions in these colonial possessions. Japan's colonial administration, marked by a harsh thoroughness and efficiency, has been notably incapable of winning the good will of the local populations. The minor difficulties occasionally encountered in Formosa and Korea are sufficient evidence of the latent restiveness of these colonies. There is good reason for the obvious hesitancy of the Japanese army leaders to engage upon the direct military occupation of the five northern Chinese provinces, which contain an additional 95,000,000 inhabitants.

Their experience in Manchuria, where the most serious existing opposition is concentrated, has not been encouraging. Despite four years of Japanese rule, the area of effective control does not yet extend far beyond the lines of railway communication. The derailing of trains and attacks on isolated Japanese groups are still commonplace items in the news dispatches from Manchukuo. Military operations in the interior are continuous, with local engagements running into the hundreds every month. The

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twenty and thirty Japanese officers and soldiers are killed in action each month in Manchuria; unofficial sources place the figure much higher. A statement by the Kwantung army on September 10 fixed the total Japanese casualties since the beginning of the Manchurian invasion at 3,156 killed and 7,879 wounded. These figures do not include the losses suffered by the units of the Manchukuon army. This force, said to number 130,000 effectives, has proved to be a questionable asset. One of the main tasks of the Kwantung army is to watch over the Manchurian troops lest they desert and turn "bandit," something which has occurred in many instances.

Thoroughly reliable estimates of the strength of the Manchurian partisans are impossible to obtain, owing partly to seasonal fluctuations and partly to the lack of impartial data. An official Japanese report in October placed the number of the opposition forces at 67,873. This estimate could probably be doubled without danger of serious exaggeration. The effectiveness of the armed Manchurian volunteer units, moreover, is greatly enhanced by the support they receive from the local population. Guerilla activities extend virtually throughout the Manchurian hinterland, and occasionally approach the main cities and larger railway centers. At the same time, a consolidated opposition has developed in some areas, particularly in the northeast. Here an extensive section has been controlled for some years by a Communist movement analogous to that in China proper. This movement is exerting a growing influence over the Manchurian partisan bands and gradually centralizing their activities under a unified control.

Despite the dangers threatening the stability of the empire, Japan's rulers show no intention of turning back from the path of conquest. To halt at this point might be more fatal than the risks of a continued advance. The expected economic benefits from Manchuria have not materialized. Even the military-strategic gains, in view of the accelerated pace of the Soviet Union's preparations to meet the threat of Japanese expansion, are of doubtful value. North China has therefore become the new life-line for Japan. Discussions of the iron resources of Chahar, the coal deposits of Shansi, the cotton-growing possibilities in Hopei and Shantung and the revenues and markets of North China—currently appearing in Japanese periodicals—are curiously reminiscent of the early phases of the Manchurian invasion. The Japanese military, of course, are bent on crushing all opposition elements in China and rounding out the necessary strategic base for the "big war" that they foresee. Behind the lines of this conflict, should it occur, forces will be at work that may prove more destructive to Japanese imperialism than the foreign enemy.

T. A. Bisson.

This is the first of two articles on the crisis in Japan. The second, by Mr. Guenther Stein, will appear in an early issue.—The Editors.

Nothing to Write Home About

Notes on the Margin of a Round-Trip Ticket

I HAVEN'T much faith in "swings around the circle" by political pundits who ride across the country in Pullman cars for a week or so and then profess to tell how the next national election is coming out. I have made or coöperated in a good many of these tours myself and I know how often it is true that the political expert comes back with the opinion he took with him or the opinion he thinks his readers would like to hear. Usually he talks in various cities with political leaders or local newspaper editors who almost invariably indulge in wishful thinking. A national referendum like those of The Literary Digest or the Institute of Public Opinion, if honestly and intelligently conducted, is worth a hundred times as much as the personal views of any itinerant prophet.

In spite of this fact, I feel I must record the deep impression received in the course of a leisurely journey across the United States, of a sharp decline in Mr. Roosevelt's popularity since I was eight years and then have a national debt no larger

tioned above) that if the election were to be held tomorrow, and if the opposing candidate and platform were such as to appeal to large numbers of people, Mr. Roosevelt would lose. The propaganda of the Liberty League, the Economy League and similar groups has undoubtedly had an important effect, particularly when reinforced by the influence of powerful reactionary publishers like Colonels McCormick and Knox, Harry Chandler of The Los Angeles Times and W. R. Hearst. Everywhere I went, I found people who believed that an unbalanced budget is an unqualified disaster, that it is likely to lead in the immediate future to destruction of the national credit and that "recovery" is impossible until income and outgo are equal. Everywhere, people took it for granted that the way to achieve this was to reduce outgo, not to increase federal income. If one remarked that we could go on with a deficit of four billions a year for

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with expressions of open-mouthed bewilderment.

Even more important, in my judgment, than the sort of propaganda just mentioned, in building up the case against Mr. Roosevelt, is the widespread impression that the vast sums now being poured out are being wasted, that the government is not getting value received. If the people with whom I talked are a fair sample, the country has become exhausted in the effort to keep up with the series of sudden and profound shifts in government policy, the grandiose schemes quickly started and quickly abandoned, the programs improvised with a patent lack of the necessary months of preliminary planning, the promises, airily made for political purposes, that could not be carried out. I heard bitter complaint about P.W.A. projects that had been canceled or postponed because they involved expensive materials and equipment and everything else was being sacrificed in the attempt to put 3,500,000 men at work by November (afterwards changed to December) first. I heard apprehension expressed as to the ability of states, counties and cities to take care of the "unemployables" dumped back upon them by the federal government. I heard many and bitter protests about the details of the Works Progress Administration activities, complaints that there was nothing really useful for its beneficiaries to do—nothing, that is, which satisfied the President's demand that most of the money go for wages and not for materials.

Despite all this (if I may step out of my role as reporter for a moment) it still seems to me likely that Mr. Roosevelt will be reëlected. The Republicans are almost sure to throw away their chance of victory by offering the country a bad program and a candidate with whom they cannot win. In particular, and no matter what promises they may make, they are sure to give the impression that if they are victorious, they will suspend or greatly curtail all types of relief and all payments to the farmers under the A.A.A. To millions of people, the choice will seem to be one between bad relief and none at all, and they will vote for the former.

Bus versus Railroad.—A great struggle is now in progress between the railroads and transportation by highway, the roads having been deeply alarmed by the loss of passengers to the buses and freight to long-distance trucks. The warfare has resulted in improvements on both sides of the battle line. The railroads have reduced their rates, west of the Mississippi, have speeded up their services (this partly to compete with the airplane) and have brought down prices in their dining-cars, sometimes to a startling figure. The buses have gone in for streamlining, seats that are marvels of comfort, sleeping berths and lavatories. Several important railroads have seen the handwriting on the wall and have themselves bought or started bus lines through their own territory. The Union Pacific is specializing in tourist Pullman cars, which are much superior meals so inexpensive that I should guess the road must lose a large amount of money on them every year. Other lines are being forced to follow suit.

It was on the Santa Fé that I observed a notable addition to railroad service. On its best trains between Chicago and Los Angeles, this line, popular with the Hollywood colony, has a special car in which writers bound to or from the movies may operate their portable typewriters. On the westward trip, I understand, the hopeful authors pound out rough drafts of scenarios; on the eastward journey, having failed to make good in the cinema world, they go in for magazine articles on "What's Wrong with Hollywood."

The Diesel-engined streamline trains represent the railroads' chief hope of salvation. Not only do their higher speeds attract passengers, but their operating costs are about one-third those of trains with steam engines of the present type. The running time from Chicago to the Pacific Coast is some seventeen hours less with the Diesel trains, assuming proper roadbed; overnight service between Chicago and Denver is expected in the near future. I rode one of these trains whose daily run is nearly six hundred miles, on a schedule that demands an average speed of sixty miles an hour, including all stops and the time lost in the big-city yards. Part of my journey was made at better than eighty miles an hour, which seemed about as fast as forty in a standard Pullman. Universal air conditioning, indirect lighting, good and inexpensive food on trays which attach to the back of the seat ahead of your own, porter service even in the day coaches, have made these trains a great success with the traveling public; after the novelty value has worn off, people still wait hours and go to much other inconvenience to use them.

Rosinante V-8 to the Road Again.—While airplane, bus and railroad fight for the right to carry passengers, people's own cars continue to do far more of the job than all other means of transportation put together. The West, as everyone knows, is where no one thinks anything of climbing into his car for a thousand-mile run. No Eastern filling station can hope to vie with those of the Pacific Coast, where the attendants, garbed like the captain of ushers in a movie theatre, swarm over your car whenever you stop, tenderly taking it apart and putting it together again, with heel-clicking and salutes. Not until you have toured the land of the setting sun do you realize what a tourist camp can be like. (They are called Motels—cute?) Nearly always, they are cleaner and cheaper than the few vestigial hotels that they have not yet killed off; and the largest ones, I am told, are resplendent with symphony orchestras, baths outrivaling ancient Pompeii, recreation leaders and Camp Songs.

Newer than the Motel is the Trailer Camp; the West has broken out in a rash of them, and now every few miles may be seen a caravansary [illegible]

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stream-lined aluminum elephants, stabled side by side and provided, for a mere pittance, with gas, water and electricity. The new type of motor vagrant takes his trailer with him and spends a week, a month or a winter in one spot, moving on at five minutes' notice whenever he gets bored. An amazing number of such semi-stationary travelers seem able to live without working; others find jobs here and there and travel again when the work peters out.

Depositions by Two Ladies.—Ella May, owner and operator of the All Nite Eatery and Novelties in Little Forks, Colorado, speaking:

Was they any special magazine you wanted, Mister? O.K., go ahead and look 'em over. I guess you're surprised to see how many I got. If you don't want to buy one, you can rent it—a nickel for three days. I got every magazine I ever heard of that's returnable. I don't carry none that they won't take back.

Here's your change—twenty-six cents, and that there is eight mills—sales-tax money. Looks like half of a safety razor blade, don't it? You seen the sales-tax money in Missouri? A fella was showing me the other day. Milk-bottle caps with printing on it. Down in New Mexico they got little round coins that look like gold. A lot of the boys complain that this here stuff cuts holes in their pants pockets. At that, it's better than when every time you bought anything you had to pay a penny tax. That mounts up in a day, when people is poor.

Sure, times is some better, but they're bad enough yet. This store don't hardly earn enough to keep me and my husband and the kiddies going. Sure, I got two—six and eight, they are. Last winter I took a little girl to board, three dollars a week, and I don't know what we'd a done without that money. Her mother had a job as a cook, up at Pine Flat. We come pretty near going on relief, but we made it.

That relief don't listen so good to me. I was over to Utah a while ago—I was raised in Utah—and I seen a lot of them sitting around living on relief. Why don't you put in a garden, I says to them, and they says, If we do, the relief people will hear about it and maybe cut down on what we get. Some people give up awful easy. Well, come in again when you're passing. I got a lot of movie magazines coming in from Denver tomorrow. Yeah, on the 1.12. . . .

The other lady whom I wish to report rode beside me in the stage for a hundred miles across the New Mexican desert. Brunette, young, smartly dressed, speaking idiomatic American with no trace of any accent, she startled me when she said:

Sure, I know this country well. I ought to. I'm an Indian myself. Yes, going up to the pueblo to spend the winter with my folks. Been away for linesman, and we live over to Nevada. He had a good job until a couple months ago; we got a short-wave radio and an electric refrigerator. But he got laid off and it seemed the best thing was for me to come back for the winter to the pueblo. Gee, I dread it. My people are what you'd call blanket Indians. They don't understand American ideas. They don't have nothing—not even plumbing. I couldn't write and tell them I was coming. The government made me go to school and get all out of Indian ways, and now I have to go back to them. . . .

At the pueblo, I was permitted to witness one more scene in this minor tragedy. I helped carry her smartly varnished rattan suitcases to the designated adobe house, from which there emerged a hugely fat and elderly squaw in Indian costume. My fellow passenger was swallowed in a vast embrace, amid a rattle of the tribal tongue. When I, perhaps somewhat officiously, called, Well, goodbye and good luck, the daughter of two worlds called back, already, I thought, a little reconciled, And good luck to *you,* too, Mister. And thanks about the suitcases.

Bridging the Golden Gate.—As a former San Franciscan, I dreaded more than anything else the sight of the two new bridges that city is building, fearing lest they should reduce the mighty freedom of the Golden Gate to something roughly resembling the western end of Long Island Sound. They do not. The outer bridge, connecting the city with Sausalito and points north, is as tall and stately as a clipper ship, two beautiful high towers with a spider web between them. The second structure is even more thrilling, seen in detail: a tremendous causeway coming from the misty Oakland shore to Yerba Buena, which all San Franciscans know as Goat Island, and tunneling through it. Between the island and San Francisco itself, the span soars overhead at an unbelievable height, its vast towers supported on concrete anchorages as solid as Gibraltar and sunk through deep water. As the ferries, so soon to become the victims of technological obsolescence, creep between these anchorages you can see remote above you in the sky the tiny figures, fingernail in size, of the daredevils who are building this gigantic structure, defying Nature's ancient plan, putting concrete and steel where blue water has always been. Once again, as always, you marvel that a country capable of such magnificent and proud achievement should tolerate as it does so much stupidity, cruelty, blind greed; you are astonished that Americans do not stand up on their feet and build on this continent a civilization worthy of these bridges tossing their steely lace into the sky.

San Francisco. BRUCE BLIVEN.

(This is the last of a series of articles reporting

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Under the Nazi Christmas Tree

What puffs and patters?
What clicks and clatters?

I know what, O, what fun!
It's a lovely Gatling-gun!

—From "Our Army," picture book for Third Reich Children.

THOUSANDS of little German boys and girls will recite such fascinating verses on Christmas morning when they unwrap their copies of Nazidom's new Military Mother Goose, the season's best-seller in book and toy stores of Berlin.

This popular picture book for Third Reich little ones is entitled "Our Army," and it is published in practical nursery format—with each of its eight pages mounted on reinforced cardboard one-sixteenth of an inch thick. The gayly colored illustrations depict tousled blond children proudly goose-stepping alongside handsome soldiers whose jolly faces beam amiably out from under heavy German steel helmets. The book's heroes, little Hansel and Gretel, sit joyously, equally rapt in admiration, beside the wheels of field-guns engaged in merrily launching shells at an invisible enemy.

"Nursery rhymes" accompanying the pictures describe the soldier's life: "Choose your cover now with care, hold your rifle steady," or

In perfect step the Reichswehr comes
Along the avenue,
With merry fife and rolling drums.
Come, we'll go marching too!

The same festive Christmas shop windows show many other striking new gifts. Germany's Saint Nicholas has gaily joined the ordnance department of Hitler's army in making more than picture-book deliveries. Biggest single item in his 1935 pack is a grand supply of "trench helmets for boys and girls." These are exact replicas of the steel helmets worn by the regular army and are so far the best-selling Christmas present in Berlin toy stores. The "tin hats" are actually made of tin, painted gaily with camouflage-colors, and are sold for one mark (about 40 cents) each.

Second most popular toy is the tank, in a dozen ingenious forms, all painstakingly realistic. These range from tiny replicas four inches long, wound up with a key, which race about the playroom spitting electric fire through miniature machine guns, to "one-child" tanks on the model of American go-carts and baby autos, inside which the playful Nazi child may himself sit and manipulate the steering wheel and guns to his heart's content.

Gala feature of Christmas displays in most toy stores, however, are magnificent displays of an unusual brand of toy soldiers. Under the spreading Christmas trees these "Made in the New Germany" [illegible]

World War frontline fighters of all armies—are thrillingly grouped in battle scenes which lack only the cries of the dying to achieve one-hundred-per-cent realism. Bomb-shattered trenches, barbed-wire entanglements, shell holes full of the wounded and dying, and ruined villages may all be purchased complete by the Christmas shopper. These front-line settings include miniature fighters in German, British, French and American uniforms in every posture of clubbing and bayoneting. Even dead and wounded strew the ground.

All kinds of weapons are depicted in lethal operation—including even miniature batteries of flame-throwers. Special marvels of the new toy-makers' art are the artillery groups, with riders flogging straining horses into position and little gun crews clapping shells into long-range cannon. Tiny contrivances—green and brown discs, each sprouting a flame-and-smoke-colored diadem—even mark the spots where shells are landing. In fancier Battle Sets, for children of the more well-to-do, these "direct hit" markers are electrically wired and contain an electric-light bulb, which is flashed on or off at the wish of the child commander. In the background, surveying the troubled fields, there is usually a figure of Hindenburg—or even of Hitler.

But the book stores are giving the toy stores a keen run for their money this Nazi Christmas. The shelves are loaded with such "seasonal" titles as "The Battle of Tannenberg," "Two Lads in the Navy," "Horst Wants to Be a Soldier" and similar combinations of carnage and adventure. Great care has been taken to simplify the wares to the level of youthful readers. Nazi Munich, once rustic and peaceful, does not fall behind Berlin in the realization that it will be a Brown Christmas. The Münchner Zeitung, actually the most conservative journal still existing in the capital of Bavaria, heads a full-page spread: "Books Under the Christmas Tree," and leads it off with a new boys' book: "A Child Goes to War."

This war novel for the little ones is given the honor position on the season's list as "a remarkable book full of heroic power and enthusiasm." "It provides a thrilling insight," continues the review, "into the youthful soul with its capacity for enthusiasm and thirst for adventure, and shows how that soul, in the school of war, swiftly develops to maturity and manhood. The chance, as volunteer, to get away from school and to be able to rush into battle and adventure works like an intoxicant upon the soul of the fifteen-year-old hero of the book." The reviewer concludes by saying that this novel "is not only a memorial to the volunteers of the Great War, but, before all, a book of instruction and example for our present youth."

One official National-Socialist publishing house, however, believes in providing Germany's young-sters this season with practical as well as inspira-

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pletely illustrated: "Soldiers' Handbook," "Pistol Handbook," "Machine-Gun Handbook," etc.—manuals for each weapon in the world's arsenal. These instructive booklets, priced at one mark, have sold like hot cakes.

Most unique item of the whole gift literature, however, is surely the "Vocal Volumes of the Army and Navy." These are not books at all, but two supersize phonograph records, advertised as "carrying to the ear and heart of every true German the spirit of our glorious warriors." The army's "vocal volume," for instance, is introduced by the thunder of a crack infantry regiment marching at the goose-step. Commands are barked. A military march composed by Frederick the Great follows. Bugle calls come next, artistically woven into the sound of distant salvos of artillery fire. In a sudden ceremonious quiet, the oath of allegiance to the Fatherland is recited in the high quavering voice of a young recruit. The "volume" closes impressively: a renewed surge of marching and musketry fades dramatically into the solemn strains of the National Anthem, "Deutschland über Alles."

All in all, "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men" seems to be just a trifle too old-fashioned for St. Nicholas in this year of our Lord 1935 and the third year of the Führer. To the foreign observer, Santa's pack in the Third Reich has begun strongly to resemble a regulation army knapsack.

RALPH THURSTON.

Lindsay and Masters

IT WAS the last two chapters of Edgar Lee Masters' beautiful and stirring biography[1] of his friend and fellow American poet Vachel Lindsay that moved me most deeply. In the last chapter of the book Masters has his own say and I like that. He has been writing of his friend. He is moved and angry. I like this kind of healthy male indignation. It is good, like the healthy strong anger of that other American, Theodore Dreiser, fighting for some friend, fighting some stupid injustice done someone he loves. . . .

Masters must have written this final chapter just after finishing that other chapter in which he put down Lindsay's finish. And what a death that, what an unrelieved, stark tragedy.

There is the Lindsay house in Springfield, Illinois, Lincoln's home town, town of the struggles of the great and forgotten Altgeld, town to which the beaten and defeated Grant went to make a new start, town in the midst of the fat rich Illinois country, land of corn, of corn like forest trees. There is a picture of the house opposite page 28 in the book. I think Edward Hopper should go to Springfield some day and make a painting of that house . . . house full of haunts it would be for the poet born into it. There are not many houses in the Middle Western corn country in which one family has lived so long. It was the house in which Lindsay was born. He died there. That was good.

House haunted, after death, by Lindsay's father, old Doc Lindsay, by the insistent, determined, religious mother . . . she must have put the bee on Lindsay all right . . . by colorful grandfathers from both sides of the family . . . Lincoln adorers, Lincoln haters, Northerners and Southerners . . . these coming there in the years after the Civil War . . . neither side knowing exactly what they had fought for . . . in what war did the fighters ever know . . . angry, perhaps in their hearts knowing both sides had been defeated.

One wonders if Lincoln would have seen down through it if he had lived on for a time.

Lindsay living on in that house through childhood, through boyhood, and young manhood, through death, in that house, in that town. He must have been a boy or young man there when John W. Gates came down from Chicago to stand on the State House steps and pass out money to legislators who put through his Chicago street-car franchise. Gates a big and important man in the state; Lindsay and the men who were his father and grandfathers unimportant. Of what importance is an old doc, going about in his buggy, long after automobiles came in, delivering babies, taking care of the sick . . . I dare say, most of the time, forgetting to send his bill . . . of what importance the boy who was to become one of the three or four important American poets. Hopper, you'd better go down there and paint a picture of that house, or Charles Burchfield you go. Let's try to keep the banner up for Lindsay; Masters has done his stint.

Vachel Lindsay's end in that house. Let me just lift a few paragraphs from the pages of the book. It has the stark simplicity of great writing:

> Ill and exhausted, with only $76 in his pocket as the profit of a grilling lecture experience, and with $4,000 in debts for living expenses for his wife and little children and for himself, there was no place for him to turn for solace. He was in the fatal trap, the door had sprung to and fastened itself, and there was nothing for him to do but to wait for the end. The wait was not long, it was but a week, but the torture of that week defies words.
>
> He was up and down in bed, at times too weak to go about safely. He was having auditory hallucina-

[1] [illegible] New York: Charles

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ting his death and the death of his wife, and blackmail. His wife could not assure him that he had been merely dreaming. After he took her word that it was all a dream he would recur to the wild belief that enemies were about the house seeking his death. He was taking bromides and Luminal, but sleep fled him.

At dinner [on the evening of his death] he fell into pitiful tears, saying that he was an old man, and that his life and work were finished. After dinner Mrs. Lindsay got him upstairs again, and then she descended to the living room to read. He had asked her to leave him, he wanted to be alone.

In about half an hour he came downstairs full of energy and fury about every real or imagined wrong that had ever been done him; he stormed with accusations against Mrs. Lindsay for the injury she had done him in her double role of tyrant-mother and scarlet woman who had taken his virginity. He wanted to get away from her and the children, and so announced himself. He wanted to go back to Hiram College, there to begin over the dreams of twenty-one, and to write more magical songs. His wife told him that she would not stand in his way, that she was only concerned for his care and support if he left her. Lindsay replied to this that He who watches over the sparrows would take thought for him. This frightful frenzy, these whirling words lasted for three hours; then he was exhausted, and in the wrath an angry ghost he stalked upstairs. Mrs. Lindsay after a time followed him, and found him pretending to read.

She closed her eyes, finally, though not in sleep. Then Lindsay arose and descended to the lower floor again. Mrs. Lindsay in anxiety for him followed him. She found him in the dining room putting up the family pictures, those of Mrs. Lindsay and the children, those he carried with him on his lecture tours. He looked calm and peaceful, now, and when she asked him if he were all right, he replied, "Yes, dear, I'm quite all right. I'll be up in a moment."

Mrs. Lindsay went back to bed, and fell into sleep. In about fifteen minutes she was awakened by sounds of something crashing downstairs. And then she heard footsteps heavy and fast, and then the sound of Lindsay coming upstairs on his hands and knees. Mrs. Lindsay rushed out to get him, fearing that he was making for the room where the children were asleep. By this time, Lindsay was running through the upstairs hall, with his hands up, looking white and scared. As Mrs. Lindsay screamed he fell. When he was put in bed he asked for water, saying, "I took Lysol." The doctor was quickly summoned, but when he arrived Lindsay had ceased to breathe. His last words were, "They tried to get me; I got them first." It was December 5, 1931, at one o'clock in the morning.

Can you wonder after that, after reading these few paragraphs from the book, that Masters, after writing them . . . himself a poet, land-lover, Illinois-lover, America-lover, that he turned then, full of fine male anger, to the writing of another chapter, accusing America?

For allowing it, for allowing itself to forget earlier American dreams, to forget Jefferson, to forget what Lincoln must at least have thought he meant . . . Illinois forgetting Altgeld . . . the West and the Middle West going whoring after the East money . . . the East whoring after the tired, worn-out culture of Europe . . . the old dignity of old beliefs gone. . . .

The great broad sweet land that Lindsay did love, that he sang of, often with such glowing gusto . . . with such clear sweetness often enough. . . .

Trying, in his flaming days, always to lay the foundation for an American culture. What matter if he sometimes went religiously fantod? Johnny Appleseed, Boone, Jefferson, Altgeld, John L. Sullivan, Bryan in his good days before they got him into the money racket . . . Lindsay trying to set up in America a nest of heroes, to do for American life what Greek heroes once did for Greek life.

The man Lindsay doing this most of his life, in a kind of religious ecstasy . . . tramping . . . strange enough figure, God knows . . . through the streets of cities . . . the long walk South, from New York to Florida . . . North again, then later West, toward the Pacific. . . . Talking, talking, talking . . . singing sometimes . . . shouting sometimes . . . land-love, town-love, city-love. . . .

Garages, livery stables . . . I dare say factory doors where workers pour out, drug stores, hardware stores, doors of farmhouses . . . shoes often enough worn-out, clothes worn-out . . . "I had an apple and a can of beans, bought at a store, yesterday. I walked fourteen miles."

Then sudden fame, as it would come to such a man here . . . his queerness, strangeness, helping a lot to bring it on. Bang! Bang! Bang! Here comes General Booth on his way to heaven. If it were to be a Lindsay heaven it would be a strange enough place. It, that is to say fame, was no heaven for Lindsay. They do it to you if you let them.

The usual story. They took him, I think, most of all, for a kind of freak . . . this sugar-lame boy who couldn't grow into something. It might be what manhood is, the thing we must grow to. Call it sophistication. It's being on to the racket.

They petted him for a time, made much of him—I dare say spoiled him a lot—and then forgot him. They found someone else to entertain them, be freak for them. Wear-your-hair-long boys. Parade for them.

Then for Lindsay, lecture touring for the women. That will finish a man O. K.; it's almost as sure as going to Hollywood. The Hollywood boys get more dough. His spirit strength ebbing away, the realization coming of what he was doing to himself, knowing his power to see going, to feel going, to love going. Then the Lysol. It's a disinfectant, isn't it?

It's a story O. K., this one of Lindsay that Masters tackled and has done so well. To me it is a story of a writer, by a writer, for writers, but I may be wrong about that. It may be a story for all young Americans.

And I dare say that if painters do go some day to Springfield, to paint the house Lindsay lived and died in, they'll find it has become a museum. We do very well by our poets here, when they are dead

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Washington Notes

The W. P. A. Found Sadly Wanting—No Help for White-Collar Workers—Governor Talmadge Has to Work Fast

EXCEPT for the important fact that the unemployed are receiving slightly more money, it is clear that the W. P. A. represents no improvement on the old F.E.R.A. work-relief program. Administratively, the W. P. A. is distinctly weaker. The old F.E.R.A. was an autocracy, with Hopkins as autocrat. Whatever he or Aubrey Williams or Jacob Baker decided should be done, was done almost at once. Compared with other government agencies, the F.E.R.A. moved at the speed of a high gale. Last winter the Republicans and conservative Democrats in Congress, who disapproved of the whole idea of federal relief, demanded that the present $4,000,000,000 relief fund be placed under the supervision of Comptroller-General McCarl's office and the Treasury, and to this Mr. Roosevelt tamely agreed. The result was to create an almost impossible administrative situation. The machinery of the traditional government departments moves like an Alpine glacier, although with none of a glacier's certainty.

Not only did this administrative set-up delay the W. P. A.'s program until December 1, but it greatly modified the character of its work projects. Under the F.E.R.A., Hopkins approved projects—golf courses and wading pools—that have a trivial sound when recounted by Liberty League speakers. But since it was the administration's policy not to undertake work requiring expenditures for tools and materials, or that might conceivably compete with private business, he was inevitably forced to concentrate on small public luxuries. Under the W. P. A., this basic policy has been unchanged, but most of the real ingenuity shown by Hopkins' staff in developing projects has been wiped out. Hopkins always was ready to take responsibility for his F.E.R.A. projects, and to tell his critics they were "just too dumb to understand." The bureaucrats of the regular government departments have had no such courage—or, if you like, foolhardiness. As yet, no summary of the W. P. A. program is available, but it is generally rumored that many of the most imaginative projects have been killed. What have emerged from the Comptroller-General's office and the Treasury have been the projects that seemed safe from criticism, regardless of whether they had especial merit.

There have been accusations that the W. P. A. was deliberately created as a means of enabling county and city Democratic leaders to gain control of relief. As nearly I can determine, this is partially true, partially false. According to information here, Democratic politicians dominate the W. P. A. organizations in six states, Arizona, Connecticut, Iowa, Kansas, Mississippi and New Mexico, and in these states the relief program is in difficulties. Over the remainder of the country, the situation varies widely. In fifteen states, the old F.E.R.A. organizations have been kept largely intact, and things are running smoothly. In the rest, the top W. P. A. officials are unquestionably political appointees, but most of them have proved ready to take from the local bosses, and their work has been fairly good.

The worst trouble has come from the political appointees in the lowest ranks of the state W. P. A. organizations. The W. P. A. has been a hurry-up job, requiring an immense amount of paper work. In many states, the clerical help at the bottom of the W. P. A. has apparently been too incompetent to do the work assigned to it. An essential part of the program has been the classification of the unemployed according to their skills, and the development of projects on which these skills could be profitably used. This work seems to have been badly skimped. To a wholly unjustified extent, what are known in relief jargon as "reservoir projects" have been resorted to. Landscaping in public parks, for example, is a "reservoir project," something that an indefinite number of workers can be kept busy on for an indefinite period of time.

Perhaps the greatest tragedy of the whole W. P. A. program has been the failure to authorize an adequate number of white-collar projects. For this, the blame seems to rest rather with Washington than with the state authorities. The exact number of white-collar jobs provided under the W.P.A. has not been announced, but it is reported that New York and Los Angeles are the only cities with substantial programs, and that even in these cities the number of jobs is inadequate. Because white-collar projects were judged to be peculiarly vulnerable to the charge of boondoggling, it was originally decided to employ the bulk of the white-collar workers on statistical surveys under federal supervision. The biggest project was to have been an unemployment census. Sometime in August or September, the entire white-collar program was scrapped—according to report, on orders from Mr. Roosevelt himself. It was rumored that the President's political advisers had warned him that the unemployed were heartily sick of being investigated, and that still another survey might have unfortunate repercussions, not to mention the chance of white-collar workers' having their noses broken. No substitute white-collar program was ever formulated. In most cities, a white-collar worker applying for W. P. A. employment is offered a choice between an unskilled laborer's job and starving.

In the opinion of many observers here, the W. P. A. is proving to be less efficient, less intelligent, than the old F.E.R.A. But when, last winter, Mr. Roosevelt outlined the present relief program to Congress, he promised that it would greatly surpass the F.E.R.A. Still more important, he promised that it would furnish a permanent technique for dealing with unemployment. The $1,160,000,000 allotted to the W. P. A. will be exhausted between March 15 and April 1 of next year. What is to happen then? Despite Mr. Roosevelt's promise of permanency, no one knows. The Resettlement Administration, the Rural Electrification Administration, the C.C.C. and various other agencies probably will still have unexpended balances next March that could be used to continue the W. P. A. if the administration wishes, but there is a growing belief that Mr. Roosevelt intends to place the whole relief question once more before Congress. Since federal relief began, in 1933, neither relief officials nor the unemployed have ever known for more than a few months ahead what their future status was to be.

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Roosevelt exuberance of Governor Talmadge of Georgia lies in a provision of the Georgia Constitution forbidding a Governor to serve more than two terms. Talmadge's second term expires next November. Although an amendment lengthening the term of the governorship is to be voted on next fall, it is doubtful whether it will legally entitle Talmadge to run for a third time. There is no election for Senator next year in Georgia. Talmadge therefore faces the abrupt ending of his political carer if he cannot attach himself somehow to a successful anti-Roosevelt movement.

Washington. T. R. B.

Other People's Money

A Word to Bankers—Confidence Is Here Again—A House-Building Boom—The Silver Policy Blows Up

IF YOU talk to bankers they will tell you there is no money to be made in the banking business now. All they have is government paper in increasing amounts and some of it at a fraction of a percent interest. Yet one reads almost daily of bank dividends and extra dividends. Last week, the Bank of America National Trust and Savings Association, in addition to paying its regular quarterly dividend of $1,250,000, declared an extra dividend of $1,000,000. That's not so bad. Perhaps it has not occurred to the bankers that there ought not to be a terrible lot of money in the banking business if a bank were run purely as a bank.

Wherever one goes now one hears the eternal theme of prosperity. Mr. Hoover insisted that the only thing that was lacking all the time during his inglorious regime was confidence. If confidence makes for prosperity that elusive virtue now seems to be with us. In Detroit everybody I met asked me with an almost childlike delight if I noticed the tremendous difference in Detroit. I did. The anti-Roosevelt papers ring the changes on the new gospel of Roosevelt and ruin, but all this is sandwiched in among the countless items depicting the rising tide of good times. Headlines are black with figures about the increase in payrolls, the greater number of men employed, the enormous rise in retail trade. In Pittsburgh the same song is sung. Retail trade is higher than it has been in four years; the Christmas spending has already taken hold; the Jones and Laughlin Company has opened more payroll windows to accommodate the increased line of workers; the steel towns are in better shape.

I tried to find out what bearing all this had on political sentiment. The state of mind of the people is quite obvious —almost an open book. No political psychologist is needed to read it. They believe that better times are coming and that in some mysterious way Roosevelt has done it; they have almost no faith in any of the Roosevelt policies discussed separately, and they have no faith whatever in the present Republican opposition to Roosevelt. They do not seem to feel that there is anybody against him who has a concrete plan. The Republicans will have to go a mighty long way to make any impression on this feeling between

The first signs of real activity in the building industry have appeared. They are not nationwide, but they are fairly vigorous in certain spots. For instance, on Long Island something like a small house-building boom has appeared. In one place a company is putting up 1,000 houses to sell for less than $5,000, which is a hitherto unheard-of price on Long Island. There are a number of companies putting up 300, 200 and 100 houses in developments. If this were to spread to the rest of the country it would enable Mr. Roosevelt to reduce his spending a little. Unfortunately the house-building season is coming to an end. It remains to be seen whether the coming summer will see a resumption of this activity. That will depend on how the present crop of houses sell. They ought to sell because, regardless of the stability of the actual construction, they represent as large an advance in design on the 1929 crop as the new Fords represent on the old models. But commercial building continues to hang back.

It has been interesting to see the burst of big black headlines in the Midwestern Republican papers about the "blowing up," as they put it, of Mr. Roosevelt's silver policy. Apparently that policy has blown up all right. It must be put down as one more failure for the New Deal. Silver, which was to be driven up to $1.29 an ounce, has only reached 65 cents after eighteen months of experiment. And China, which was to be made into a heavy buyer of American goods by forcing up the price of silver, has just abandoned silver as a money base. It has been accumulating its silver to dump on the London market, where dear old Uncle Sam and his almoner, Mr. Morgenthau, would buy it, giving gold in return. I do not know how this result can be called by any other name than failure. Mr. Roosevelt once said that he had experimented a little with gold and that was a flop and that he was ready to experiment a little with silver. Well that's a flop too. But it will make no difference in Mr. Roosevelt's gay mood. It's all a merry lark. And look at the country—prosperity coming back, the market rising, everybody hopeful. Of course, don't look at the 11,500,000 still unemployed. That would spoil the picture.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

Season for the Mind

Ocean is man's great thought. He comes,
Intemperate of mood, to seek and trace
Across her bounding surface the brave sums
Of truth his pride invites; the green-lit grace
Of waters is upon him. Earth is gone.
All loamy fields long plowed, the breasts well kissed
Dispel their purpose—he is free, alone,
And thought is on him like perpetual mist.

He is not less earth's own for being given
A season to this greatness; in his veins
The myrtle garden where the spade is driven
Grows green for burial of what remains
His body answers earth; but here, salt-sweet,
All wisdom haunts him, earthless and complete.

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To Act One's Age

IN PUTTING "Ah, Wilderness" on the screen Hollywood has done some beautiful work. Also it has done some very shoddy work, partly owing to Eugene O'Neill's original play. There might be adolescents like the hero here (I have never seen one), but even granting that, there would be nothing so very fine about them. Such cases of acute callowness may be made the object of serious study, just as you could take for study the tapeworm (*cestoda:* a family of Platyhelminthes). But they cannot be taken with any seriousness when they are put forward as the hero, as Youth Eternal, spouting its Swinburne, joining its Christian Endeavor to save the world, and at the same time pompous, pulpy, mean and eternally damp of diaper.

This play, centering all the regrettable features of adolescence in one character and then implying that this is the essence of a soul on fire, is false at bottom; it is designed for the patronage of those who like to forget, gloze over not understand and generally think well of themselves, looking back. I am sorry to mention it here, but the nearest thing to O'Neill's hero that I can remember, from living as a kid in those New England towns, is a group of upstanding youths that my folks once forced me to travel clear across the town to strike up a comradeship with, instead of hanging out with the scum of our own neighborhood. The lads across town had honor stars from the First Congregational Church of Ware, Massachusetts, they were clean and orderly sons of good Christian people with money in the bank, and at the age of thirteen they concealed a mixture of incest, exhibitionism and betrayal of their sisters to neighboring honor-star lads (also of the Eagle Patrol) that surprised me considerably.

Well, well, boys will be boys; but the point to keep in mind for all ageing idealizers of puppy attributes is that children are also people, however difficult and inept, and that adolescence is a stage of life, not never-never land. O'Neill's play pivots around some young squirt who graduates from high school with a violent and empty yen for revolution and for a slip of a daughter whose father is very mean and disapproves of everything, including the squirt. His own father is kindly and quizzical in curbing the radicalism of the wayward boy (who for climax gets drunk, quotes Oscar Wilde, repents and gets the girl), and tells him straightforward facts about Life, Society and, hm, well, a certain kind of, hm, Woman. Stage and screen can play around with this as they like, developing characters and creating business, but this is the basic thought that Mr. O'Neill thought.

Some genius on the stage might make something reasonable and real out of the boy. But that this would have to be done largely without benefit of the playwright is very well illustrated in the picture, where Hollywood has cast for the part some earnest soul who will read the lines for what they look like and raise unlikely banality to its highest degree. The fault here, that is to say, is brought into clearer relief by the more naïve and literal method of the movies. The virtues are some of them undermined because of poor acting (*e. g.*, Wallace Beery, [illegible] dramatic, inevitable and full of terror. It is a credible story of men; it has a wilderness, but no Ah.

What the screen really makes out of "Ah, Wilderness" is a first-class atmosphere piece. It calls up more matters than it knows of by its sure reconstruction of the day-to-day life of the New England country in a time (1906) that is as dead but as vivid in the general memory as the smell of leaves burning in piles along the gravel walks, this fall or when you were a kid. Practically all of it that is good is background, in the way of local color. Not only the sets of stiff cluttered rooms, lawns, gas buggies, picnics, but the incidental life of the place. Take the high-school graduation, shifting rapidly from the audience of proud parents to the speakers, quartets ("Asleep in the Deep"), the valedictorian and the serious young chit in pigtails, fighting a very sick clarinet with a wild roving eye of reproach for her accompanist. Or the barroom scene (the fast baby here was perfectly fine); or the scenes at table, or on the morning of the Fourth (a little overdone), or at the school sociable. And at times, what with the genius that often goes into Metro production—cameras, set crews, and particularly the musical arranging of Herbert Stothart, always appropriate and frequently an inspired counterpoint to the action—at times the picture is beautiful, as in the spooning at night on the Common, with the trees quiet and dark over the grass, framing a white Georgian church as sweet as music. Much of the film is silly, but "Ah, Wilderness" remains a job of picture making, in craftsmanship and feeling, that is wonderful to see.

"Show Them No Mercy" is a picture that comes nearer to acting its age, in the sense both of timeliness and of maturity. It is a gangster film, with the boys hiding out in an old house in the country, having kidnaped parents and child and got away with thousands in ransom. The baby squalls, a woodpecker drives Edward Brophy practically insane, one of the boys wants to delete the family by means of gunfire—and this growing turbulence among themselves, leading to wild moves, stupid blunders and betrayal, makes the picture. The story is built logically and with dramatic pressure on every square inch, and there are cast as the outlaws Cesar Romero, Bruce Cabot, Warren Hymer and Edward Brophy, good solid performers all. The forces of good, represented by the mother, father, cooing baby, chief of detectives, etc., are incidental here, the pay-off being that although Will (Sniffer) Hays held up the purity seal until the original title, "Snatched," was changed, he subsequently solemnly affixed same to a show that pictures virtue as being dull as dirt and villainy predominant and fine.

There are unfortunate lapses—Romero, brain guy, becoming a babe in arms and letting Cabot get him; Hymer overplaying the contribution-box theme; the close-up of Cabot, machine-gun slugs showing in catsup marks on his chest like four dots on your typewriter, etc.—but these faults are shoved aside by the sheer violence of the story as a whole. Such a scene as that where the two are running from the stalled car in the meadow, wild awkward shadows picked out by a spotlight, one of them brought down in the machine-gun fire, sets the pace for the show, which is conceived and managed so as to be direct, surely

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Recorded Music

WHAT IS true of Bach and Mozart is equally true of the popular music now being created in America. Benny Goodman, in the course of a performance of a popular tune, may improvise a sequence of phrases on his clarinet that will take one's breath away with their poetry and subtle rhythm; or he may achieve only the external style of these phrases. And a group of first-class players assembled in a recording studio, warmed and stimulated equally by gin and one another's skill and appreciation, may improvise a masterpiece like the "Moonglow" of Goodman's group that I mentioned a while ago, or only an aggregation of playing styles in the general style of popular music.

These observations are the result of my examining a large number of recent records that had been warmly recommended by one of the authorities on the subject. Outstanding among them as a product of inspired creative musicianship is Columbia 3026-D, made by a small group under Red Norvo. Its one defect is some treacly trombone playing; but this is compensated for by the piano solos of Teddy Wilson, which have all his usual imagination, subtlety and perfection of form. These, in my opinion, place Wilson with Benny Goodman in a class apart from even the best players—even "Fats" Waller, for example, who is superb himself, and gets fine support, on Victor 24738; or the pianist and one or two other soloists of Chick Webb's group on Columbia 2926-D; or the soloists with whom Wilson plays under Taft Jordan on Perfect 16102. The only thing I have heard recently that is comparable with the playing of Wilson and Goodman is on an old record (Columbia 14064-D) of a blues sung by the unequaled Bessie Smith: the obbligato of miraculous delicacy and wit that turns out to be by Louis Armstrong in his young days. I prefer it to his brilliant playing on Okeh 8535, which has been reissued; but Okeh 41581, on which he sings a blues, ends with a few measures of very beautiful trumpet playing. Bessie Smith, let me add, is at her best on Okeh 8949, as one may imagine from the titles: "Gimme a Pigfoot" and "Take Me for a Buggy Ride." To these add a characteristic contribution from Tampa Red on Bluebird 5878, "Shake It Up a Little," valuable chiefly for the superb accompaniment of guitar, kazoo, piano and jug. And the extraordinary recitatives of Lead Belly on Perfect 0314-5 are not to be missed.

Benny Goodman has been devoting his time to leading a large band in performances of arrangements of new song hits; and while the arrangements on his recent Victor records are excellent, and the performances as good as such performances can be, only occasionally are they distinguished by imaginative solo work. Victor 25011 has a fine solo by Goodman; 25009 good solos by other players as well. For the rest there are examples of good playing, with a good solo bit here and there, by groups under Benny Morton (Columbia 2924-D), Wingy Mannone (Okeh 41569) and Duke Ellington (Victor 7440), as well as some mediocre things that I won't bother to mention.

One of the events of the year is a recording (Victor, as are all the items that follow) of Beethoven's Quartet the last quartets—in the marvelous performance of the Budapest Quartet. This replaces an earlier incomplete and less well recorded version made by the group when it was differently constituted; and released with it is the recording made at that time of the formidable Great Fugue, the original conclusion of the Opus 130. Also, the Pro Arte group does a superb job with Franck's long-winded Quartet. And in the second movement of Beethoven's "Kreutzer" Sonata the Menuhins' playing is perfection itself, but in the rest they lack fire and intensity.

Outstanding is a Ricercare from Bach's "Musical Offering" played by a chamber orchestra under Edwin Fischer. And Cortot leads an excellent performance of the Brandenburg Concerto No. 1. Victor's new version of Mozart's "Eine kleine Nachtmusik" is superior to Columbia's older one in recording, but Ormandy's performance is less distinguished in style than Walter's. Fischer is represented also as a pianist—as one, this time, concerned largely with pianistic effects—in performances of a beautiful Chaconne of Händel and the Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue of Bach.

It is a mystery how H.M.V.'s recording of orchestral performance—as exemplified in records released here by Victor of Mozart's Symphony in E flat played by the B.B.C. Orchestra under Walter, and of Beethoven's "Eroica" played by the London Philharmonic under Koussevitzky—can be so poor when Victor's own achievements are so extraordinarily good. Individual instrumental colors are reproduced faithfully enough in quiet passages of the "Eroica"; but there are forceful passages that must be meaningless to someone who doesn't know them, for one hears only the booming of brass and strings and not the melody in the woodwinds, or a heavy mass of sound and not the individual melodic lines of which it is composed. And even the transparently scored *tuttis* of Mozart are dull and poorly balanced.

You would, however, never suspect this from the reviews. You would never know that whereas Walter's reading of the Mozart is excellent, there are details of Koussevitzky's "Eroica" that make one's gorge rise; that the same is true of Stokowski's performances of Tchaikovsky's Fifth and his own "Parsifal" synthesis, and of the synthesis itself—a piecing together of mere bits of the third act wrenched out of organic context to provide a series of effective moments; or that Strauss's "Also sprach Zarathustra" is bad music, and Koussevitzky's performance does not conceal the fact. You will, that is, find almost no critical treatment of records. Even The Musical Quarterly, unlike important musical magazines in England, does not deal critically with records at all; and this disdainful attitude of the musical highbrows has resulted in the field's being largely preëmpted by record salesmen who, incapable of telling bad from good themselves, merely elaborate on current estimates and reputations which they pick up around them. There is, then, no corrective to the policies of the record companies; and the public is without guidance.

The Minneapolis Symphony under Ormandy contributes a volume of delightful Strauss waltzes and overtures, and also Mahler's Second Symphony which some Mahlerites, for reasons I cannot see, disdain. The performances are technically brilliant but musically not of the finest grain.

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done by the Kolisch Quartet, an excellent performance of Lalo's "Symphonie Espagnole" by Hubermann, and a fine "Fledermaus" record by Lotte Lehmann.

Among subscription releases of H.M.V. are a sixth volume of Beethoven sonatas (F major, Opus 10; C minor, Opus 13; A flat, Opus 31) magnificently played by Schnabel except for an excessively fast and confused finale in the Opus 31; and a fourth volume of Wolf songs (from the Italian Song Book) sung by Hüsch, Kipnis, Rethberg and Ginster.

B. H. HAGGIN.

CORRESPONDENCE

Neutrality or Sanctions [1]

SIR: As a liberal, interested in the defense of world peace against fascist aggression, I find it impossible to follow the logic of The New Republic's position on American neutrality policy. It seems to me a little late to condemn the League of Nations as an instrument of the "haves" against the "have-nots." Concessions made earlier might have averted fascism. But fascism is here. The three great unsatiated Powers, Italy, Germany and Japan, are controlled by hysterical, war-mad militarists and imperialists who are not only threatening world peace but are menacing the very existence of liberalism all over the globe. Concessions to fascism today will only be interpreted as weakness in Rome, Berlin and Tokyo and will encourage further aggression.

The League today is not the League of Wilson, nor yet of Poincaré nor of Stresemann and Briand. It has become a grand alliance of liberalism and communism for mutual defense against fascism. Britain, France, the Little Entente, the Balkan bloc and the Soviet Union have common interests in resisting fascist aggression everywhere. These interests, if you like, are "selfish" interests, but they happen to coincide for the present with the interests of all liberals and of all friends of peace. The League works and sanctions are now a reality precisely because the common menace of fascism has brought unity at Geneva and enabled the League to function in the service of the common political interest of its members. If the League halts Mussolini, fascism everywhere will have been struck a stunning blow and all fascist war-makers will be given pause. If the League fails, all fascist war-makers will be encouraged to attack and the world will descend into bloody chaos.

It is preposterous to pretend that the United States has nothing at stake in this contest and to argue that it should be "neutral" and "isolationist." The forces of fascism are as much a menace to liberalism in America as elsewhere and as much a threat to the (selfish) national interests of the United States as to those of the League Powers. Every sane liberal must welcome American efforts to aid League sanctions against Italy and must deplore any frustration of these sanctions by American war profiteers or American isolationists. It is, I concede, regrettable that the President and the State Department are in effect coöperating with the League in the name of a neutrality act based on isolationist assumptions. The remedy is not non-coöperation, which will play into the hands of fascism, but a modification of the act, permitting the Executive to support sanctions openly. If American membership in the League is still a political impossibility, then let this policy be based on the Kellogg Pact.

The New Republic cannot seriously believe that complete American economic isolationism is a better means of keeping the United States out of war than a policy of aiding the League States to prevent and suppress war whenever it is precipitated by the fascist powers. The New Republic cannot seriously argue for a complete embargo against Great Britain if Mussolini, facing strangulation, should attack the British fleet. American interests and liberal interests are here identical with British, French and Soviet interests. Despite inevitable delays, these interests are being served at Geneva. The League will halt the Duce—unless American isolationists come to his rescue.

Politics makes strange bed-fellows. But I never expected to see The New Republic in the same bed with Father Coughlin, the Hearst press, the oil merchants, the Croix de Feu and all the other fascist or quasi-fascist elements throughout the world which are attempting to hamstring League sanctions against Italy. I am sure that I speak for many of your readers when I suggest that you have not thought the issue through in terms of contemporary diplomatic alignments and in terms of the new role of the League in fighting war and fascism. In this contest all liberals and all far-sighted Americans must stand behind Geneva.

FREDERICK L. SCHUMAN.

The University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

Dr. Beard and the Prophets

SIR: In your Contributors' Box you say: "Charles A. Beard . . . is a dairy farmer in Connecticut."

He whose ken encompasses history from the dawn to now;
he who stoops to touch the loftiest economic thought;
he who strikes Thoristic blows for social justice;
he who hurls Jovian thunderbolts at political corruption;
he who stands today the foremost champion of the rights of man.

Well, Diderot probably had a vineyard; Paul made tents; Amos was a herdsman and a dresser of sycamore trees; Aristotle, master of those who knew, grew a garden.—Why shouldn't Charles A. Beard have herds of Herefords, Holsteins, Guernseys to yield him bonnyclabber, curds and whey?

BONNER FRIZZELL.

Palestine, Texas.

Mr. Jesse Jones and the New Haven Road

SIR: My attention has just been called to an editorial in your issue of November 6.

Your statement that the Interstate Commerce Commission, contrary to my wishes, denied the request of the New Haven for an additional loan from the government, has no basis in truth. I not only did not suggest to the I.C.C. that an additional loan be approved, but concur with the views of the Commission that the road is in need of reorganization in the public interest, and so advised Mr. Palmer, president of the road, some days before his application was filed.

JESSE JONES,
Chairman, Reconstruction Finance Corporation.

Washington, D. C.

[The information on which our editorial was based came from a source that we have hitherto always found reliable. We are of course glad to accept Mr. Jones's statement on the matter, and to make this public correction.

We assume we are right in saying that Mr. Jones's letter indicates that he has changed his attitude and policy and that this is both important and good news. In the past, as New Republic readers are aware, with his concurrence and in some instances under his leadership, large government loans have been made to railroad companies which needed reorganization instead of loans, some of these companies having not long afterward run through the government money and been forced to go into bankruptcy. The result of the government loans was to deepen the plight of the companies and their investors. Congress finally, at its last session, forbade the government to make loans to railroad companies that need reorganization.

We hope Mr. Jones's letter indicates that he will use his great powers to support another requirement recently made by Congress. At its last session, Congress charged court officials dealing with bankrupt railroads with the duty of investigating past mismanagement and fraud. If this were well done, it would enable investors to get back a considerable part of their losses, through lawsuits against financiers and directors who have disregarded or abused the trust imposed in them. Such investigations will mean nothing unless conducted by men of high ability, courage and impartiality.

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this about and to replace indifferent officials already chosen for such tasks.

Mr. Jones, specifically, could perform a great public service by demanding that railroad reorganizations shall henceforth be thorough and durable, and that promoters and financiers of the type familiar in the past shall be kept out.—THE EDITORS.]

The Green Corn Rebellion

SIR: As a former resident of Oklahoma, I wish to enter a protest against the letter-review of William Cunningham's novel, "The Green Corn Rebellion," which appeared in The New Republic of October 23 over the signature of Nathan Asch. . . .

I have just finished "The Green Corn Rebellion" and I am prepared to make an unqualified statement to the effect that in all respects the reality projected in the book has its counterpart not only in what I have seen and heard but also in my own active experience. . . . I have known sons and relatives of the men who participated in that abortive march on Washington—Cunningham conveyed to me something of that bewilderment and frustration that were deep in the marrow of those men, which stood out above everything else in every first-hand yarn I've been privileged to listen to concerning those days. Hear ye, hear ye—"The novel is a difficult form; the novel is to be used for a certain kind of expression; *it is not to be used to tell plain facts.*" (Italics mine.)

Yes, Mr. Asch, Oklahoma stinks, it stinks now and it stank then; it will continue to stink until more people realize that preoccupation with "plain facts" is the first step toward any understanding of a region, a people, or a new manner of government. I am not a critic. I am a person interested in fair play. Mr. Editor, "Let somebody else review it."

ELMER BRASHEAR.

New York City.

From The New Republic Mail Bag

Paul Brinkman Jr., of Portland, Oregon, tells of efforts being made by authorities in Snohomish County, Washington, to force three schoolgirls, aged eight, nine and ten, to salute the flag, when it is against their religious scruples to do so. This seems to Mr. Brinkman to be something very much like foreign despotism at its worst and he thinks patriotism is used all too frequently as a cloak by demagogues and scoundrels. . . . A subscriber in Detroit notes that billboards in that city carry the slogan, "Thanks to Courageous Automotive Leaders, Detroit Is Prosperous Again." He says there are a thousand or more school children in Detroit not in school because of lack of sufficient clothing who will be glad to see the billboards and to note that their city is again prosperous.

On the civil-liberties front, the Joint Committee to Aid Herndon Defense announces that it will carry on the fight to get Angelo Herndon fully and finally free of all charges against him. The anti-insurrection law of 1866, under which he was convicted, recently was declared unconstitutional by the Superior Court in Georgia, but the case is being carried to higher courts by the state and the Committee will aid Herndon in all subsequent actions. . . . Edward Drolette, first of the defendants to be tried for his part in the anti-Nazi demonstration aboard the steamship "Bremen" last summer, goes on trial December 23. The International Labor Defense, 22 East Seventeenth Street, New York City, is collecting a fund for his defense. . . . The Brotherhood of Utility Employees in Flushing, New York, is calling upon all labor unions and labor sympathizers to come to the aid of Martin A. Wersing, J. A. Greulich and Michael Wagner, allegedy discharged because of union activities. The local asks that letters and telegrams of protest be sent to F. W. Smith, president of the Consolidated Gas Corporation, 4 Irving Place, New York City.

The Political and Labor Bail Fund announces a campaign to raise loan deposits totaling $100,000 to "provide bail for persons arrested because of their participation in political, economic or social struggle; because of their efforts in behalf of downtrodden minorities; because of their beliefs; or because of their efforts in behalf of the working class and against war and fascism." A number of prominent persons are int[illegible] them give their services on a volunteer basis. They ask that loans or gifts to the fund be sent to the Political and Labor Bail Fund, 104 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

The League for Industrial Democracy, whose headquarters are at 112 East Nineteenth Street, New York City, announces the forthcoming publication of New Frontiers, a monthly magazine devoted to authentic research in contemporary social and economic problems. A number of experts in various fields are represented on the editorial board. Yearly subscriptions, which include one full-sized book on a contemporary subject, will be $2.50 for non-members of the League. Paid-up members will receive the magazine free.

Worldwide efforts on behalf of political prisoners are reflected in our recent mail. The Provisional Committee for Cuba writes that Cesar Vilar, general secretary of the Cuban Federation of Labor, about whom we commented editorially a few weeks ago, has been tried and sentenced to four years in prison. The Committee is glad that Mr. Vilar was not made the victim of terroristic methods of the Cuban government that so often result in an arbitrary death sentence, but believes that Mr. Vilar is wholly innocent of the charges brought against him and is conducting a campaign to have him released from prison. The Committee's headquarters are at 77 Fifth Avenue, New York City. . . . The Anti-Nazi Federation of New York calls attention to the fact that Ernest Thälmann, leader of the German workers, was scheduled to go on trial in Germany on November 15. Since that time no word of the outcome of the trial has been received nor can any information be obtained through normal news channels and the Federation is making a concerted effort to obtain from the German government information as to his fate. Persons who wish to sign a petition for Thälmann's release are asked to write to the Anti-Nazi Federation of New York at 168 West Twenty-third Street, New York City.

The New York City file begins with a letter from the League of Women Shoppers, who are asking the support of intelligent women who will use their purchasing power, collectively, to improve the working conditions of those employed in manufacturing and selling goods they buy. The League asks sympathetic persons to communicate with the League of Women Shoppers, at 258 Fifth Avenue, New York City. . . . John Rimassa of the City Projects Council writes of a campaign now being conducted in behalf of W. P. A. professional and white-collar workers who receive $71.50 per month and have not been granted the ten-percent raise given other categories of W. P. A. employees in New York City. Petitions are being circulated to have the $71.50 group raised to the $93.50 classification and persons interested in signing the petition are asked to communicate with the City Projects Council at 139 West Twenty-second Street, New York City. . . . B. L. Ribak, executive secretary of the Association of Workers in Public Relief Agencies, 219 Seventh Avenue, New York City, tells of the campaign for reinstatement of Miss Anna Lyons, a worker recently discharged by the Emergency Relief Bureau in New York. The Association says that Miss Lyons was discharged because of her activities in the Association and asks aid in obtaining her reinstatement.

Paterson, New Jersey, contributed an interesting announcement last week in the formation of The Paterson Press, which its sponsors say is the only community-owned and community-operated newspaper in the United States. Publication was scheduled to begin December 12 and the paper will represent the 3,000 individuals and 100 organizations who own it rather than the wishes of large financial interests and large advertisers. Its editorial policy will be liberal and will seek to serve the interests of the housewife and the working man, the small merchant and the professional worker.

To finance its campaign against lynching—already there have been three more lynchings in 1935 than in 1934—the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is issuing books of Christmas seals. They were designed by Richmond Barthé, young Negro artist, and may be had in books of 200, selling at two dollars, by writing to the headquarters of the Association at 69 Fifth Avenue, New York City. . . . Charles M. Hart writes us about the Third United States Congress Against War and Fascism, to be held in Cleveland January 3, 4 and 5. All organizations and groups opposed to war and fascism are invited t[illegible]

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Quite Worth Your Thought

Paradise Lost, by Clifford Odets. Longacre Theatre, December 9, 1935.

IT IS neither for nor against "Paradise Lost," Mr. Clifford Odets' new play, to say that it follows the Chekhov method. This implies the seeming irrelevance among details, the flowing exchange among characters, the constant and delicate variations in emotional pressure, as related to the individual and to the whole company present in a scene, and, most of all, that under-stream of life, continuous, conscious and subconscious. The pattern of Mr. Odets' play, also, follows fairly closely after "The Cherry Orchard." This is nothing against it, for the pattern in "Paradise Lost" is genuinely reapplied to life, which, so far as pattern goes, is all we can ask of a work of art.

In "The Cherry Orchard" the application to the Russia of its epoch is clear enough, but it is all held strictly within the contents of the play, which would be moving and perfect if we had never heard of any epoch or social states of mind. The implications are all subtly implicit. In "Paradise Lost" the application of the scene to the spiritual and financial uncertainty of this present day is repeatedly recalled to you. There is, also, the play's ending, which is by no means that of "The Cherry Orchard." The family is being put out of the house, it is true, as in Chekhov. But the real ending of "Paradise Lost" occurs in the father's last speech, in which he expresses his faith in the future. The explicitness of this motif, coming thus at the final curtain, may be taken, of course, as expressing the dramatist's creed, which is one side of the matter. On the side of art, this motif and the speech conveying it to us are moving and beautiful because they provide the release and culmination of character. We feel that at this moment the climax in a man's life appears, cleaned, lucid and complete. For that moment, at least, we see his dream become his substance.

To compare a drama to a Chekhov drama is not necessarily to say anything, since a button may have the general method followed in a shield at Marathon. There is no harm done necessarily with these comparisons. And yet the harm is almost sure to begin at once. It is the easiest and most obvious thing to do critically, since mere external comparison in qualities—often of mere stature—takes the place of some closer critical discernment of the work of art immediately in hand. In painting, for example, to call Largillière the Van Dyke of France, as has often been done, gets nowhere. In the drama we have Goldoni, "the Molière of Italy." The next step is to blame Goldoni for not being Molière. It is not fair to posit a dramatist as being like Chekhov, and then establish a judicial combination where you complain if he imitates Chekhov too much and complain if he does not parallel Chekhov enough.

To Mr. Odets' play as produced at the Longacre by the Group Theatre, I went possessed of hope, for I had noted the three other Odets plays, especially "Waiting for Lefty." I saw a stage that was entirely confusing. An ugly room with a sort of stair hall at the left, a door on the right, at the back an outlet to the rest of the house. I could not make out what sort of people such a home was intended meant for some stylized setting, dramatic of what there was to be in the play. Then the acting began. Not a moment of quiet on the stage, people entering perpetually, in out, out in, right or left or rear, et cetera. I could not even tell whether the family was meant to be Jewish or Gentile. I could not even determine what general type or class of people, or type of living, they presented. Nobody looked neat—certainly not soigné even in the simplest sense. What sort of manners was I to think existed where people kept walking about nursing their own feelings, scowling, snapping, ruminating, evolving and reflecting? Were these moods or dramatic impersonations; was this household even American? Certainly it could not be intended for well bred, or even very much touched with the breeding of single feeling and sincerity. Miss Adler seemed to me constantly out of key. I still have no idea as to how much real feeling in the character of the mother she was intended to express. Mr. Carnovsky was the father. It is a character, I fancy, very movingly written, for in his speeches, when he got to them, Mr. Carnovsky spoke, effectively, some fine things. But something more luminous and continuous inwardly is necessary. A reflective, sainted and profound life does not consist in mussing yourself up, making mum philosophical faces and mooning about amidst the furniture and exits.

I understand well enough what the dramatist is trying to do here in the first act of "Paradise Lost." That wandering, unexpected and irrelevant talking and coming and going is meant to give the domestic quality and an impression of that home financially and spiritually driven in upon itself by the times. But in the performance that coming and going was monotonously spaced; it semed endless and seemed crowded. It was false to the dramatic style involved, because that style rests on endless variation and fluency, unpredictable, but once done, recognized as inevitable. The sum of this life that fills, combines, destroys or exalts thus is the sum that makes up the life and contagion possible to the play. At present, with a few exceptions, the company in "Paradise Lost" appears to play competitively almost, single performers chopping about.

Mr. Odets' shortcomings in "Paradise Lost" consist mostly in a lack of motivations drawn clearly enough, either in terms of straight statements or of some general overtone stressed for the purpose. Otherwise he needs only to be warned against a certain animation of figures of speech, fairly vulgar at times. His people sometimes speak in a wisecrack style that distracts and lowers, and even blurs what they have to say from within them. It is a way of speaking that should be confined to certain roles only, as a part of their characterization. We must say, however, that he has sought and gained more flexibility and scope, which means that he has extended his technique of expression.

Mr. Roman Bohnen as Gus, the friend of the house, acted with lovable intentions. Mr. Russell Collins and Mr. William Challee, the two homeless men in the last act, showed what could be done by a real playing of Mr. Odets' lines. Mr. Elia Kazan, as the gangster friend, was remarkable, a rather dazzling power of stage concentration, and a genuine pathos. Mr. Luther Adler, as the business partner of the good man, did jerkily in numerous scenes

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Two Items for Reference

THERE are two ways of reviewing a huge compendium like "The Columbia Encyclopedia."[1] The quicker and more convenient way is to turn the pages, read twenty or thirty articles preferably dealing with controversial subjects, and then write an essay most of which consists of the information kindly furnished by the publishers in their prospectus. Thus, you could say that the volume contains five million words—that it is as long as sixty-five average novels and would take at least a month to read if you started with "A, the first letter of the ALPHABET," at the head of the first column on page one, and went forward doggedly till you reached "Zyrian Area or Zyriansk: see KOMI," at the foot of the third column on page 1,949. You could say that there are 52,753 different articles, of which the longest is "United States," with more than 6,000 words, and probably the shortest is on a Bible character, Ahira, who gets only six. You could say that the volume is not based on any previous encyclopedia, and that it was prepared by a large staff over a period of eight years. You could say that the binding is strong, that the typography is pleasing and legible—and in two hours at the most your work would be done.

But there is another way of reviewing the book, slower and more conclusive. You can take it home, refer your problems to it for solution and, in the course of daily life, see whether it gives the information you need.

For two months "The Columbia Encyclopedia" has been standing on the desk in my study (since it is too big for an ordinary book shelf). I have to report that it is extremely simple to use, that it contains almost all the facts I wanted to find, that it generally lives up to the glowing prospectus. It is best when giving salient facts about people and places, and thus it suggests "The Century Dictionary of Names," a book that I thumbed to pieces during my boyhood. But the "Century" was last revised in 1911, I think, whereas this new book contains figures that were not available until the late spring of 1935. It also has the advantage of presenting strictly encyclopedic articles, on topics like "Calculus," "Neo-Platonism," "American Literature." Two of its principal virtues are cosmopolitanism and fair-mindedness. Foreign statesmen and cities receive the attention they deserve; modern Russia is treated at length without being judged. On controversial subjects like "Communism" and "Fascism," the contributors write with a notable devotion to fact and absence of epithet.

I don't mean to suggest that "The Columbia Encyclopedia" is faultless. The text is thinly peppered with typographical errors. In many cases the longer articles are mere undigested catalogues of fact, and the lack of paragraphing makes them physically difficult to read. I don't know the name of the dolt on the editorial staff who originated the idea of printing every article as a single paragraph, without subheads, in order to save a little space. I do know that he had better keep his identity secret if he doesn't want to be mobbed by angry people suffering from eye strain. Some of the proofreaders, too, ought to be thrown out of their union (though I doubt that they ever belonged to it; union proofreaders do cleaner work). But the fact remains that the "Columbia" is the most practical, the most scholarly and very nearly the cheapest of all the short encyclopedias.

It is so good, in fact, that I want to offer a suggestion to the editorial staff, a plea that is based on the first paragraph of Mr. Ansley's preface. "One who makes good use of the art of reading," he says, "needs to have three reference works at hand: a dictionary, an atlas, an encyclopedia. The dictionary and the atlas for workaday purposes are in one volume." Accordingly, the editors set out "to make this encyclopedia as convenient and satisfactory" as are its companion works. But Mr. Ansley is much too unassuming. The fact of the matter is that "The Columbia Encyclopedia" is more convenient than any of the unabridged dictionaries—which are as hard to move as a portable house—and much more satisfactory than any atlas designed and printed by American map-makers. My plea to the editorial staff is that they supply the two missing volumes and make the reference library complete.

Margaret Marshall and Mary McCarthy, writing in The Nation, have just finished a series of five explosive articles on "Our Critics, Right or Wrong." It turns out that most of our critics are very wrong indeed. At any rate, Miss Marshall and Miss McCarthy have collared and mugged and third-degreed a whole assortment of literary offenders—back-scratchers, log-rollers, puffers, trimmers, left-wing pundits and right-wing racketeers. They have done a useful job as G-women or vigilantes, a job that ought to be done more often. I have only two mild objections to offer. One is that they were a little hasty in collecting evidence, so that sometimes they hanged a man for stealing his own horse. The other is that they totally failed to identify one type of criminal—I mean the sniffing critic, the raised-eyebrow, Queen Victorian, we-are-not-amused-by-this critic who drives readers and editors into a state of nervous exasperation.

To illustrate the point, I might quote a few lines from The Nation's review of "Honey in the Horn." The reviewer happens to be Mary McCarthy, but might have been any one of fifty others, writing in any of ten periodicals (including sometimes our own):

> It is from the myriad thumbnail sketches . . . from the literal description of flora and fauna, from the occasional bright nuggets of rustic philosophy, that the novel gets its modicum of life. . . . The unfailing chest-thumping virility of Mr. Davis's style does nothing to give his book either distinction or interest although his prose transcription of the Western drawl is sometimes amusing.

Now I submit that "Honey in the Horn," although marred by a weak plot, contains some of the saltiest characters and some of the best descriptive prose to be found in contemporary American literature. And I submit that a critic who looks down his nose at good writing, who is afraid to betray the faintest enthusiasm for any author not previously examined and government-stamped by T. S. Eliot, is just as grave an offender as a critic who flatters the publishers and calls every third-rate book a masterpiece.

[1] The Columbia Encyclopedia. [illegible]

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Men of the Revolution

Danton, by Hermann Wendel. New Haven: Yale University Press. 374 pages. $3.75.

Beaumarchais: Adventurer in the Century of Women, by Paul Frischauer. New York: The Viking Press. 324 pages. $3.50.

WITHIN a period of five years Mr. Wendel's biographical study has been translated into as many foreign languages. If these translations have any significance at all, they obviously show that his work has received a wide popular approval. It would be interesting to inquire into the secret of this appeal to an international public that presumably has no direct concern with the French Revolution. To put the inquiry in this form is to suggest a possible answer. Almost all readers do have an immediate if not always direct concern with *contemporary* revolutions. Whether they like it or not, revolutionary movements encircle their lives, when they do not smash solidly into them, giving to individual existence a character and a direction that lie outside and beyond personal choice.

For such a public Georges Jacques Danton has a singular fascination. He does not fall into categories of time and country; he belongs to mankind. He is a symbol of action. His career enlists our breathless interest, his character our affectionate admiration, his death our pity and grief. He stands for all that is compassionate and courageous. He is the Führer of our most generous dreams. He drove the storm of the French Revolution as we would have all revolutionary storms driven, toward the harbor of sanity and justice and mercy—until petty hatreds, treachery and fanaticism swooped down upon him. Reason should tell us that such a hero is a myth. But hope and fear grip us more tightly than reason. Our bewilderment and our anxieties disappear for a brief moment in this inspiring spectacle of the flaming crusader, the revolutionary patriot without fear and almost without reproach.

Mr. Wendel's full-blooded and vigorous "Danton" is a new testament of the believers. It is wishful thinking restrained within the limits of plausibility and refined by an artist's touch. At times it is confusing and turgid, but like Danton himself it always pulsates with life. More than one biographer has relied upon the rich coloring of his style to conceal the raggedness of his information or the drabness of his understanding. Not so this biographer. His panorama of the Revolution could well arouse the admiration and envy of the most meticulous student of the period. But his Danton himself is essentially the legendary hero, a species of superman whose very failings seem like virtues. . . . This is one characterization and interpretation. There are others, to which the author refers only in passing. It was his privilege to refrain from reopening the historical controversy of *l'affaire* Danton; and he chose wisely, for biography is not a subdivision of law. But it is the privilege of the reader to disagree with his interpretation, to remain unconvinced. The weight of historical evidence (which Mr. Wendel does not discuss) establishes another figure, the revolutionary whom the late Professor Mathiez hated so cordially, or still more the Danton that Georges Lefebvre portrays, a Danton as titanic as the one we have here, but none the less a crafty adventurer, slippery and corrupt.

Mr. Frischauer's graceful and often witty prose is a fitting medium for the life of the gay, charming, irrepressible, intelligent, clever and thoroughly unprincipled rogue that [illegible] His career was not only almost unbelievably crowded. The author has no time to set up the props of his profession, no time to spare for examining, sifting and analyzing. He must hurry along. The account runs on easily from the boyhood of the inquiring son of old M. Caron, the honest watchmaker, through all the major episodes of a fascinating and enormously exciting career. It gives us Beaumarchais the court favorite and the disgraced penniless prisoner, the financial promoter and the blackmailer, the revolutionary author of "Figaro" and the secret agent of the government, the rake and the *philosophe*. It takes him from France to Spain, England and Germany, from the Old Regime through the Revolution—and at the end this explosion of energy dies peacefully in his own bed.

LEO GERSHOY.

Behold the du Ponts

The du Pont Dynasty, by John K. Winkler. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock. 352 pages. $3.

THE DU PONTS are not only one of the richest American families. They are actively engaged in industry and finance, their interests being a dominant and all-pervasive force. They sell you motor cars and scores of other products, and they sell you their own peculiar idea of freedom through their monstrous creation, the American Liberty League, whose conception of liberty would make most of the Founding Fathers gag. And they sell, wherever and whenever they can, the increasingly destructive means of waging war.

This family's history is closely identified with all three great stages of capitalism. The earlier du Ponts were highly skilled craftsmen, most of them Huguenots who fought aggressively against feudalism in the interests of developing commercial capitalism. With Pierre Samuel du Pont, the family began to move within the circle of the commercial big bourgeoisie and its intellectual spokesmen. They wanted merely a constitutional monarchy and opposed a thoroughgoing revolution against the feudal aristocracy. It was Pierre du Pont who called the early French revolutionists "blackguards and brigands" and who was later imprisoned by the Jacobins. Coming to the United States in the 1800's, the du Ponts became identified with the earliest development of industrial capitalism by their establishment of a powder factory in Delaware. They were thereafter typical industrial capitalists economically and ideologically, an active part of their enterprise, rooted in its management and needs and revolving socially around it. While not particularly important, the du Pont powder mills after the Civil War developed in typical fashion: enlargement of the scale of production, expansion by the reinvestment of profits, direct ownership and personal management and control. The du Ponts participated in efforts to overcome competition by means of pools and other devices. In the 1900's the powder mills were incorporated and became part of the trustification and monopoly movement. With the hundreds of millions amassed during the World War, from the sale of munitions to both the Allies and the American government, the du Ponts acquired control of General Motors, of a whole chemical empire and of many banks. The du Pont Company is today a monopoly combination controlling or dominating scores of other enterprises, in which management is largely separated from ownership and control; it represents financial capitalism.

Family solidarity has persisted among the du Ponts. But their ideology has changed in response to the different

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terms with the French *philosophes,* was succeeded by unimaginative, grubbing and unscholarly industrial capitalists, who in turn were replaced by the rootless men-of-the-world and cosmopolitan sophisticates characteristic of the present oligarchic system.

Mr. Winkler's pedestrian (and friendly) book is worth while because it makes the du Pont story easily accessible. It does not go, in its material, much beyond the excellent Fortune articles which appeared in 1934. The bones of the story are there, but there is no flesh on them. The author is unaware of the larger significance of the du Pont story in terms of its causative factors and its relation to the inner meaning of the changes in American life. The historical understanding of Mr. Winkler appears in many slipshod generalizations: the *philosophes* "were the brain trusters of their day"; the "bloody" Jacobins; the "grotesque" Robespierre. In this, as in his other books, the approach of Mr. Winkler is primarily that of a good feature writer for the Sunday newspaper supplements.

LEWIS COREY.

The Good Nebraska Earth

Old Jules, by Mari Sandoz. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 424 pages. $3.

THE FLATLANDS of Nebraska demanded tenacity, obstinacy, of their conquerors. Jules Sandoz was obstinate to the point of pig-headedness, even to the point of heroism. He was obstinate enough to follow his own nose wherever it led him and, what is more to his credit, obstinate enough not to whine when it led him into trouble.

In 1881 Jules had left his home in Switzerland because his father would not increase his allowance at the university. Did Sandoz *père* expect a gentleman to black his own boots? He decided to come to America and build a home for himself and the pretty Rosalie, whom his inconsistent parents did not consider good enough for him to marry. Three years later the young man who had rebelled at blacking his own boots in Switzerland was entering a claim for land on the Niobrara flatlands, much to the amusement of the eastern Nebraskans: "Great farming country. You'll never get your crops wet there." But Jules had what the land and the settlers needed—a curious and experimental mind and a certain amount of medical and scientific training. Living in a dugout amid vermin and cold, his dirty skin showing through his torn and dirty clothes, he corresponded with the government about boundaries and seeds, exchanged experiments with Burbank and wrote innumerable letters to friends and relatives in Switzerland, urging them to take up claims in this land of milk and honey. The country needed settlers—and women—and Jules never scrupled if his pictures to attract both shot wide of the truth.

Jules wrote again and again to Rosalie. Three years before he had married a woman and left her, but Rosalie need not know this. Anyway, Rosalie did not come, but Henrietta, a friend of his sister's, did. Jules cleaned himself up to meet and marry her, but there the courtship ceased. Henrietta's savings were very welcome to pay claims and buy land; she was a hard worker, and Jules was always above manual toil. At last Henrietta divorced him, settled near by and went insane. Then there was another wife and still another, pretty, industrious Mary, the mother of the author, first appalled and cowed, then fighting back. She cla[illegible] herself, while her lord and master gave with a lavish hand of food, seed, saplings, to all who came. She bore six children, one of whom he beat at the age of three months. Little Marie, with her small brother, was sent out to find the cattle after the great blizzard, and came home forever blinded in one eye, while Jules lay in bed. But the lord guarded his domain and continued to fight—the stubborn soil, drought, chicanery, cattle cutthroats, his wife and children—with his gun, his tongue and his bitter mind.

The Great War brought boom and slack and short-lived riches to the potash-land owners near by. The children grew up; some ran away, returned and left again. The girls fought for and won an education; in time Marie won a prize in a short-story contest. "Artists and writers are the maggots of society," Jules told her. But dying, obstinately dreaming of resettlement and new crops for the despairing land, he enjoined her to perpetuate the history of his battles and his territory. The energy and courage of the pioneer, so often driven onward through the toil-tempered women of the family, descended to Jules's daughters. Rather than the sons, they were the better men.

This is a wise and memorable saga of American pioneering, recited with the expansive Western gesture, bitter and fragrant as soil and prairie growth. It bears the stamp of pioneers like Jules, and of their wives and children—scarred slaves of the master, but with his blood in them. It is the story of an empire, built according to the prophecy of Walter Reed, "of blood and tears," built on the sacrificed spirit and beauty of women, on full madhouses and the corpses of suicides. In signing this truce with the brutal but indomitable spirit of her father, Miss Sandoz has opened to the present public the pioneer West, which has been treated nostalgically, picturesquely, gruesomely, but never before with such salt of the great plains—salt of wit and sorrow.

B. E. BETTINGER.

Posies?—Vetch!

O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories of 1935, edited by Harry Hansen. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

IN LINE of duty, I have lately read two collections, from cover to cover, of the "best" short stories of the past year. Halfway through the second, my eye fell gratefully on this biographical note (prefacing whose story, I won't say): "He was tempted to begin writing by reading the stories published in anthologies in 1925, believing that he could write better." Having thoroughly inhaled the odors of these two posies, I have come to the heretical conclusion that most of the "best" American short stories smell rotten. Of the nineteen reprinted here, six are horrible examples, completely fake, embarrassing to read. Seven, at the outside, are worth putting in a book. Of these seven, five are really good.

In the space I have, I cannot begin to criticize the individual stories; anyhow, the interesting thing about these collections, as Mr. O'Brien would remark, is their tendency. Only they haven't any. The only tendency I can discover is on the part of the editors to include all sorts and conditions, because they don't know good from bad. The one obviously true thing about American letters today is that it is not dead (the artificial plants in this patch don't mean anything except bad editing); it's growing all over the place, it's growing like weeds, and weeds a great deal of it is.

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Two Scrapbooks

Brownstone Fronts and Saratoga Trunks, by Henry Collins Brown. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 412 pages. $3.75.

Mrs. Astor's Horse, by Stanley Walker. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company. 333 pages. $3.

EXCEPT for one gap—the period between 1898, when New York became Greater New York, and 1926, when Jimmie Walker became its boom mayor—these two books cover trivially the informal history of New York in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In "Brownstone Fronts and Saratoga Trunks" Mr. Henry Collins Brown has thrown together a sort of scrapbook beginning with the great fire of 1835. Some of the material quoted from newspapers and magazines of various periods could be valuable to historians, but unfortunately no dates or footnotes or bibliography are given. This would be excusable if the book were valuable for the amusement of the general reader, but its rambling anecdotes grow tiresome because of the lack of any underlying connection or narrative form.

Mr. Walker's book is much more entertaining. It is a saga of the follies of Americans, and especially New Yorkers, in the jazz and boom age. The chapter on "How to Spend Money" contains some interesting examples of recent conspicuous waste, but for the most part "Mrs. Astor's Horse" is a scrappy rehash of news accounts and gossip with an occasional touch of personal observation and no underlying sense of social history. We are told what Mae West's furniture is like and what are Rudy Vallee's rules for his house guests, how people behaved at Asbury Park during the burning of the "Morro Castle" and at the Hauptmann trial while waiting for the verdict. Sally Rand, Aimee Semple McPherson, Bernarr Macfadden, Dr. Hay, Chic Sale, Father Coughlin, Huey Long, General Johnson and "Daddy" Browning are some of the flitting characters. Mr. Walker makes it clear that he personally takes no stock in the antics of folks during the nineteen-twenties and thirties, but he fails to present those antics with the bite of satire or the exuberance of wit.

Mr. Brown's book is the ideal gift for the retired old gentleman who remembers the Great Blizzard of 1888, Mr. Walker's for the idle young woman who remembers Rudolph Valentino.

M. R. WERNER.

The Social Novel

Seeds of Tomorrow, by Mikhail Sholokhov. New York: Alfred H. Knopf. $2.50.

SHOLOKHOV'S second novel is better than the first few chapters promise, but it falls a long way short of "And Quiet Flows the Don." Again the locale is the Don steppes; the time, however, is 1930, when all individual holdings were being merged into collective farms. The second revolution was sometimes as gory and always as raging as the first. Counter-revolutionary elements left over from the civil war moved about like helpless, stunned hornets, buzzing and trying to sting. Sholokhov's theme is, consequently, ambitious, but it is also too contemporary, too full of direct political meaning. Immediate events are more difficult to shape for fiction than a segment of the past. Leonov did it successfully in the novel "Soviet River," Dovzhenko in the movie "Soil." Sholokhov makes only a take part. Anyone who has seen and enjoyed Soviet movies, from "Old and New" to "Peasants," will surely recognize the figures—the ruddy young organizer and his clean strength, the scheming kulaks, the muddled but sincere and forgivable peasants. And anyone who knows Dickens will be familiar with the method of tagging characters with tricks or phrases that save the labor of character development.

Dickens and his old-fashioned novel loom rather large, anyway, among the scenes. The reformist novel plumped characters of various faces and habits into an intolerable situation—debtors' prison, the tangle of law courts, the abusive exploitation of children—and moved the situation steadily closer to the reader's eyes until he wept or cheered for the character-types. The form is too loose and too simple to hold the actions and changes that transformed the Soviet Union. The Dickens, or reformist, novel ends on a long pleasurable sigh, suggests, at best, that something must be done. The social novel must have a more exhilarating effect, even if the theme is tragic, and Sholokhov's is not.

Yet the book makes one distinctive contribution to the art of the social novel. Again and again Sholokhov shows the effect on his characters of decisions in Moscow; he steers local actions in terms of broad political principles. At one point, for example, Stalin's famous "Dizzy with Success" speech defeats the plans of counter-revolutionaries in the Don region. If a novel had been written during the Napoleonic epoch about a German or Italian village, and if each turn in the story had been visibly affected by political decisions in Paris, such a novel might have achieved something resembling the effect Sholokhov gains by showing local and immediately human situations shattered and reshaped by the expansions and contractions of a gigantic national policy. The device is, if you like, melodrama by remote control, but it brings politics out of the background down into the midst of human lives.

KENNETH WHITE.

Science on Parade

Outposts of Science: A Journey to the Workshops of Our Leading Men of Research, by Bernard Jaffe. New York: Simon and Schuster. 573 pages, illustrated. $3.75.

FIVE YEARS went into the making of this handsome and fascinating story of scientific achievement in the United States. During that period the author—himself a trained chemist with an established reputation for lucid exposition—visited some fifty of the most famous research laboratories in the country, talked intimately with scores of eminent specialists in every field, read hundreds of monographs and reports, and has produced out of a chaos of impressions and knowledge an admirably ordered panorama of American science.

Each of the thirteen chapters deals with a particular topic, and each topic is cleverly built up from the work of some outstanding specialist—around whom, however, as Mr. Jaffe is careful to emphasize, gathers a small army of brilliant and hard-working investigators. Reversing the usual procedure in books of this type, Part I is devoted to the sciences of life, leaving to the last a discussion of the physical sciences. Each section, although it may be read independently, forms an integral part of the whole, so that few who begin the book will be likely to lay it aside unfinished. Genetics, with which we commence, introduces us to the work of Thomas Hunt Morgan, whose theory of the gene

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reviews of anthropology, physical disease, cancer and glands, as reflected in the work of Ales Hrdlicka, the late William Welch, Maud Slye and John Jacob Abel. Miss Slye's researches in cancer are especially valuable to a public become very conscious of this disease; and there is also high drama in Mr. Jaffe's accounts of E. V. McCollum's work on the vitamins and Adolph Meyer's psycho-biological approach to the problem of mental diseases. Insect pests, their cause and control, are made vivid for us through the work of that veteran entomologist, L. O. Howard. Last—and perhaps better known—come the physical sciences, featuring the discoveries of R. A. Millikan, A. H. Compton, G. E. Hale (astrophysics), C. G. Abbot (weather), Hubble, Humason, R. C. Tolman and many others.

No one who wants to know where America stands in science can afford to neglect this well grounded and intelligently organized volume. HAROLD WARD.

Cameos

Flowering Judas and Other Stories, by Katherine Anne Porter. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

MISS Porter is not an easy author. Her scope is limited, and she counteracts this weakness by satire so pointed and compressed and such perfection of style that one is sometimes forced to concentrate more on word patterns than on the substance of a story. It is not absurd to speak of perfection in this context. One dares to use the word for miniatures.

These generalizations apply to Miss Porter's talent as a whole. They have to be qualified when one deals with the stories separately. Besides "Flowering Judas," two of the stories in this book, "Maria Concepcion" and "The Cracked Looking Glass," would be almost perfect by any standard. In these two, and to a lesser extent in "He," the author has superimposed rhythm and melody on the confused feelings of an inarticulate person, not in such a way as to bring pattern into a life that lacks it, but rather to bring into the reader's senses, more often by sound than definition, the emphases inherent in a character's living. When Miss Porter is writing on this level one cannot be suspicious of restraint. The essentials are there, and we know them through an unfaltering series of trivialities. All the reticence, violence and power of Maria Concepcion are in the carriage of her body when she takes her fowls to market.

In the title story a sensitive but inhibited girl is in love with a young Mexican revolutionary and in order to save him is forced to suffer the attentions of Braggioni, a labor organizer whose "gluttonous bulk has become a symbol of her many disillusions." Her lover kills himself in prison, she comes home and listens to Braggioni's singing. "He sighs and his leather belt creaks like a saddle girth." When he leaves her, sleep confuses her feeling with the symbolism of the Judas tree. It is impossible to imagine reverence of emotion conveyed with more precision than in this story, precision that gives a first impression of hardness as if its purpose were to clarify feeling into non-existence, but that serves actually to lop off irrelevancies so that the impact of a mood is subtle and complete. The portrait of Braggioni is a triumph of deflation in few words, and this without comment from the author. The elements of his character are exposed, with rare cruelty, to each other, and automatically tear down his own image of himself.

The methods of this style—understatement, rigid selec- but a free rendition of the Greek play written for Rose

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edition of "Flowering Judas." Particularly in "Hacienda," where the author is trying to describe a bustle of contradictory characters, the result is superficial and not pointed enough to give contour to any of the people involved. These few failures can be forgiven in a book that is primarily one of small patterns written with subdued and exceptional brilliance. ELEANOR CLARK.

Books in Brief

Brighton, by Osbert Sitwell and Margaret Barton. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 374 pages. $4.

FOLLOWING his sister Edith, who offered her special public a collection of golden excerpts on Bath strung together with her own rather high-colored paragraphs and somewhat prejudiced interpretations, Osbert Sitwell in collaboration with Margaret Barton has done a gay and gossipy social history of that more frequented but less distinguished watering place, Brighton. Setting the first scene in the fishing village of Brighthelmstone on a historically pregnant October night in 1651 when the royal fugitive, afterwards Charles II, stopped at the "George," whence he made his escape to France and subsequent kingship, Mr. Sitwell and Miss Barton have arranged an entertaining series of *tableaux vivants*. Famous personages from three centuries are their characters, but the shifting scenes of Brighton are their protagonist until the pleasure-loving Prince George enters with his shapely legs and his passion for building, which resulted in the pagoda-towered Pavilion. The authors then give over themselves and two-thirds of the volume to laying with lavish affection a grace-giving varnish on the Regent's much disputed personality. The great epoch of Brighton ended with the passing of this ultimate of the eighteenth-century Georges. Victoria came in the year of her accession, and although she bubbled with excitement and showed her "not very pretty gums," the Pavilion did not amuse her and the glory of Brighton dimmed. Three years later the new railway brought in hordes of lesser folk, boarding houses began to bulge with bow-windows, and London-by-the-Sea assumed its new democratic character. H. S.

Colonial Captivities, Marches and Journeys, by Isabel M. Calder. New York: The Macmillan Company. 262 pages. $2.50.

The seventeen manuscripts collected here illustrate colonial history during the struggle between France and England. The papers range from reports on fortifications to letters from indentured servants; but the two most important documents—which together make half the book—are The Journal of a Captive at Quebec, from 1745 to 1748, and The Journal of Charlotte Brown, matron of the General Hospital of the English forces, from 1754 to 1776. These have a picaresque quality akin to Smollett and throw a good deal of light on current beliefs about this country. The unknown captive records that the legislature of Rhode Island spent forty-eight hours debating whether an oyster was a fish or a vegetable. J. G.

The Medea and Some Poems, by Countee Cullen. New York: Harper and Brothers. 97 pages. $2.

This version of Euripides' "Medea" is not a translation

distance from the original, for such was his intention, and the present version has speed and vivacity. The play, however, suffers great loss in power and dignity and seems more suitable to the needs of Broadway than the library table. This loss is felt because Mr. Cullen weakens his prose speeches by such observations as "Charity begins at home" and "When misfortune enters the door, child, love flies out of the window." It would have been better to present "Medea" in completely modern dress than to attempt this compromise (Mr. Cullen has an honest desire to write of Scottsboro) which turns blind horror into trivial clichés. Mr. Cullen's original verse has the defects of following too closely in the genteel tradition; waiving these faults, the verse has poise and charm and occasional flashes of emotional sincerity. H. G.

The Gipsy-Queen of Paris, by R. McNair Wilson. Philadelphia: Macrae-Smith Company. 247 pages. $3.50.

This is the story of Theresia Cabarrus, a high-priced harlot who played a prominent role in the political maneuvers during the governments succeeding each other in France from 1789 to 1815. The beautiful daughter of a rich Spanish banker, she moved in high social circles and, in the company of scoundrels like Tallien, Barras and Ouvrard, helped to frame national policies and to loot the national treasury. To her salon came bankers and politicians, writers and coxcombs, careerists and cutthroats, spies, lackeys and lickspittles. Napoleon strictly forbade his Josephine to associate with this woman. When her beauty began to fade she became the respectable wife of a respectable husband. The book is more sensational than scholarly. The author has tried to lead us through the labyrinth of financiers' nefarious intrigues; and the result is as muddled as his appraisal of Robespierre is unhistorical. But what is to be expected of a writer who leans on the volumes of Thiers, a lying historian, and on the untrustworthy memoirs of Barras, one of the basest characters vomited forth by the Revolution; and who ignores the vigorous and original work of the modern school of this period's historians?

S. B.

Contributors

T. A. Bisson, former editor of The China Outlook, lived and taught in the Orient for a number of years. Since 1929 he has been a specialist in Far Eastern affairs on the research staff of the Foreign Policy Association.

Sherwood Anderson is living at Troutdale, in a cove of the Blue Ridge, where he is working on a new novel. He is also writing a play for Jasper Deeter's Hedgerow Theatre.

Howard McKinley Corning, a native of the Pacific Northwest, has written two books of verse, "These People" and "The Mountain in the Sky."

Leo Gershoy is associate professor of History at Long Island University and author of "The French Revolution and Napoleon."

Lewis Corey's newest book, "The Crisis of the Middle Class," has just been published. He is also author of "The Decline of American Capitalism" and "The House of Morgan."

M. R. Werner has written biographies of Bryan, Barnum and Brigham Young. His most recent book, "Privileged Characters," was published last spring by McBride.

Kenneth White, poet and playwright, has contributed literary and dramatic criticism to The New Republic, The Hound and Horn and other magazines.

Harold Ward, whose special field is the sciences and their social implications, has written extensively for The New Republic and other magazines.

Eleanor Clark, a recent graduate of Vassar College, is working on a novel.

The initials signed to the brief reviews are those of Hudson Strode, Joe Gould, Horace Gregory and Sidney Bernstein.

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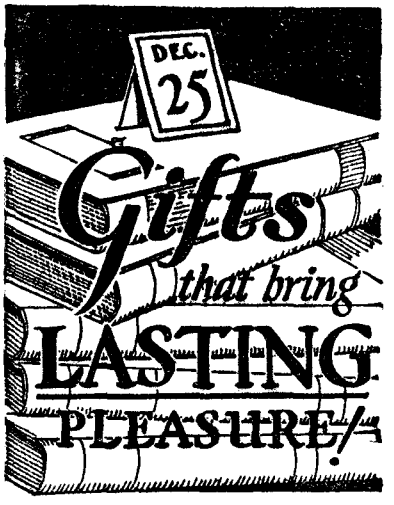

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